Malacañang ignores cries for Mendoza resignation

Story on PAGE A2

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- **One more Filipina injured in Saudi blast** NEWS/A3
- **T-bill rates rise** BUSINESS/B1

Davide rejects covenant; JDV efforts all for naught

By Philip C. Tubeza and Carlito Pablo

ELATED by the Supreme Court ruling that the impeachment complaint against him was unconstitutional, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has turned down the tripartite covenant proposed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to resolve the crisis between the three branches of government. "The decision of the Supreme

DAVIDE/ A9

House bows to high court

JDV survives ouster try

By Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana

A HOUSE divided, inside and outside its walls.

The House of Representatives was in an uproar last night, after the Supreme Court ruled the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. was unconstitutional, and Speaker Jose de Venecia said he was "constrained" to abide by the decision.

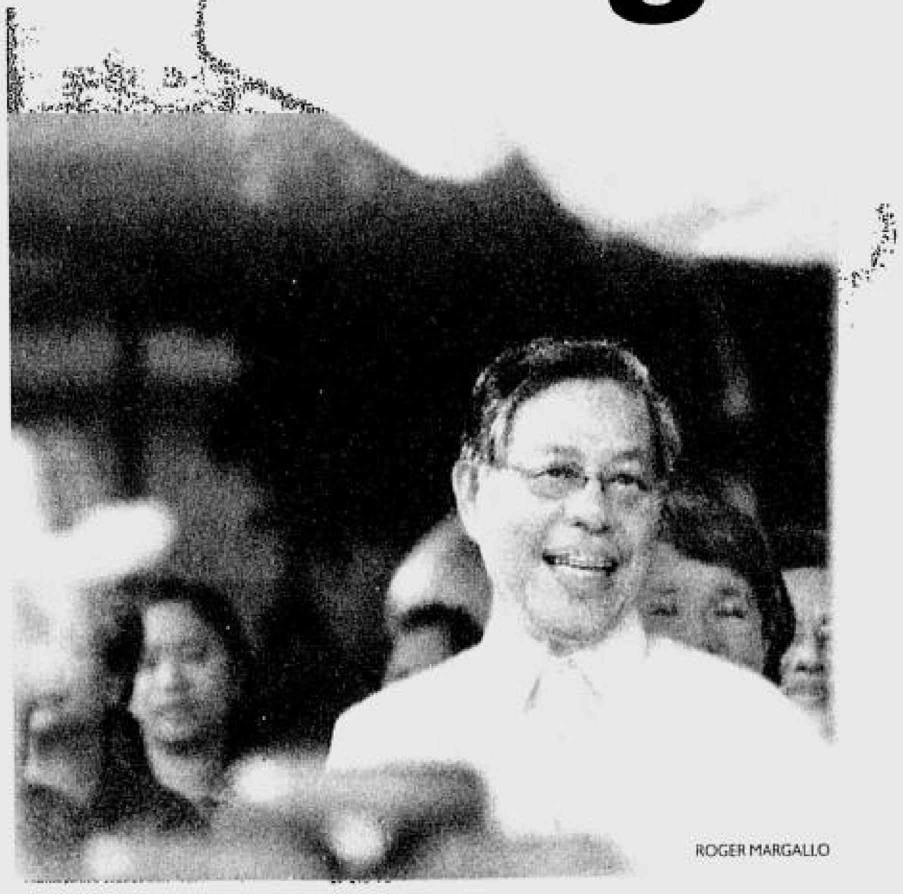
De Venecia's dramatic decision immediately threw the House into turmoil. It drew jeers and applause from the jam-packed gallery, while court employees from Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Caloocan, Manila and Pasay cities walked out of the proceedings in disgust.

Many congressmen milled about the session hall, conferring in clusters, debating De Venecia's remarks. The leader of the Nationalist Peoples Coalition, Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, told a TV reporter he was taking a wait-and-see attitude. The NPC, a coalition partner of De Venecia's ruling Lakas party, had led the second complaint against Davide.

One thing seemed clear. Several hours after the high court issued its ruling, De Venecia had himself become a target of congressional fury.

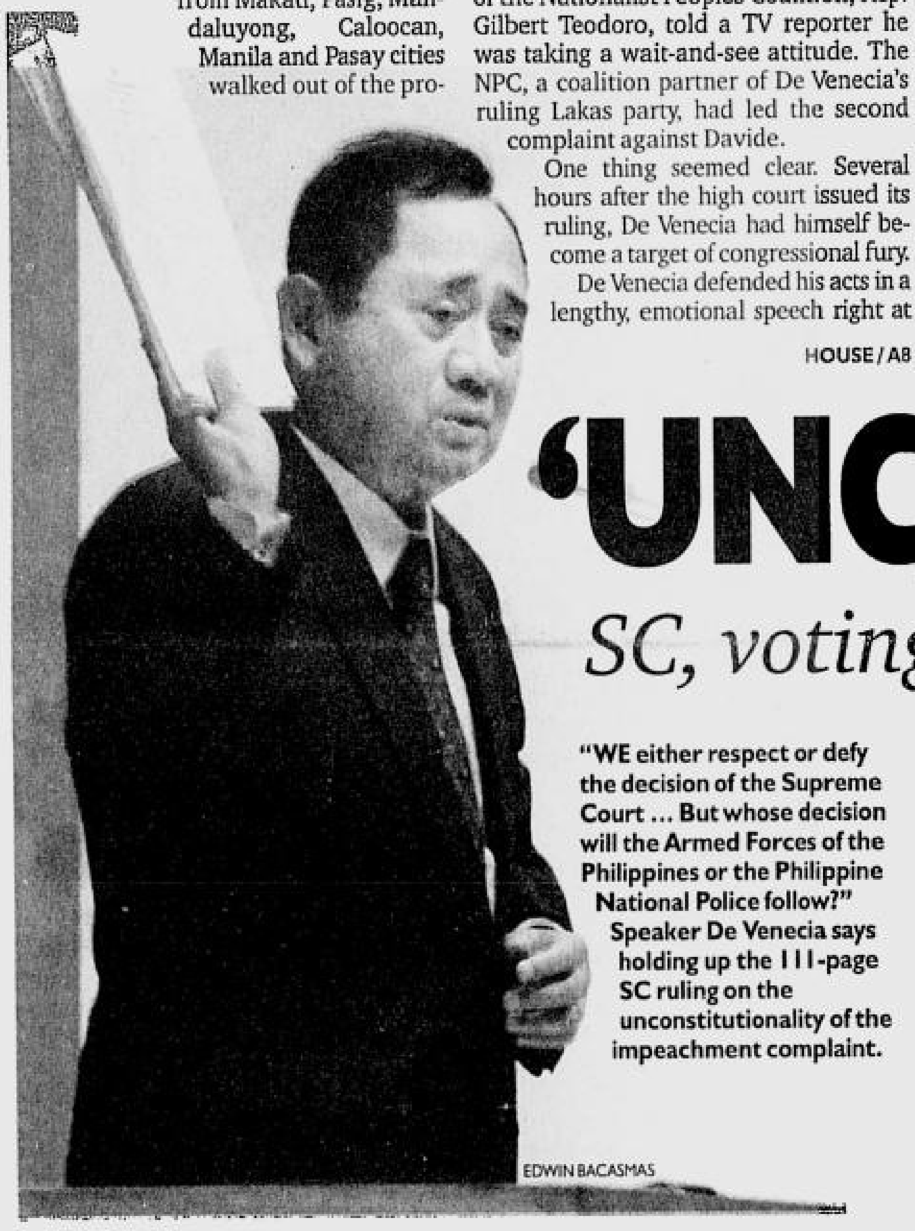
De Venecia defended his acts in a lengthy, emotional speech right at

HOUSE / A8



ROGER MARGALLO

THE UNFORGETTABLE fight of his life is just over, and there it is for all to see on the face of Chief Justice Davide Jr., who in the day of triumph for the rule of law, attends Mass for his retiring colleague Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo at the Supreme Court compound.



EDWIN BACASMAS

"WE either respect or defy the decision of the Supreme Court ... But whose decision will the Armed Forces of the Philippines or the Philippine National Police follow?" Speaker De Venecia says holding up the 111-page SC ruling on the unconstitutionality of the impeachment complaint.

'UNCONSTITUTIONAL'

SC, voting 13-1, strikes down impeach complaint

By Michael Lim Ubac and Philip C. Tubeza

"BARRED" under the Constitution.

Eighteen days after more than 76 congressmen allied with businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. signed the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the Supreme Court ruled decisively, by a vote of 13 to 1, that the complaint had violated the Constitution.

In a 111-page decision, the high court also struck down the revised rules of impeachment of the House of Representatives as unconstitutional.

Associate Justice Reynato Puno, who presided over the oral arguments last week, cast the lone dissenting vote.

The tribunal also voted unanimously, 14-0, that it had jurisdiction over the six petitions seeking a stop to the impeachment.

But three justices wanted the SC to exercise judicial restraint and allow the impeachment process to proceed: Puno, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Josue Bellosillo. They urged their colleagues not to rule on the matter until all the remedies in Congress had been exhausted.

Davide inhibited himself from the deliberations.

"Face-to-face thus with a matter or problem that squarely falls under the Court's jurisdiction, no other course of action can be had but for it to pass upon the problem head on," Associate Justice Conchita Carpio-Morales wrote in the landmark decision. A total of 10 justices, however, wrote separate concurring or dissenting opinions.

The tribunal ruled that the exercise of judicial restraint—as espoused by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.—over justiciable issues "is not an option before this Court."

UNCONSTITUTIONAL/ A8

De Venecia says crucial words, earns praise

By Cynthia D. Balana Volt Contreras and Carlito Pablo

SUFFERING from the flu and a sore throat as he confronted the wrath of the pro-Davide impeachment congressmen, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. yesterday managed to survive a motion to unseat him.

And he earned high praise from unlikely quarters in the packed gallery.

Economist Solita "Winnie" Monsod, who's known to be no fan of De Venecia, said, "All of a sudden I have respect for him; this is the first time he took a stand."

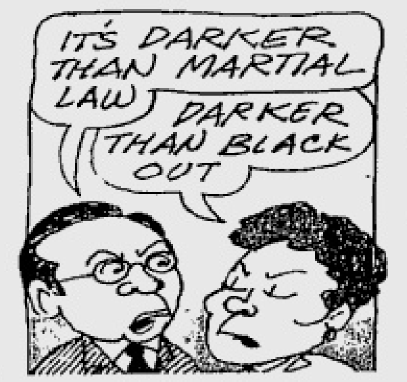
"This thing can ruin him politically, but he ceased to be a politician and became a statesman," she added.

"What he said was crucial. It turns the tide," said Bayan secretary general Teddy Casiño. "It has more weight than 76 signatures (the number required for an impeachment complaint to prosper in the House).

The Speaker's crucial words consisted of less than 10: "I'm constrained to respect the decision of the Supreme Court."

De Venecia broke down on many instances as he tried to explain why he was going against his earlier manifestation filed with the Supreme Court and the multi-party agreement questioning the tribunal's jurisdiction on the petitions before

DE VENECIA/ A9



IT'S DARKER THAN MARTIAL LAW
DARKER THAN BLACK OUT

Is Tatad color blind?

By Jerry Esplanada and Christine Avendaño

FORMER Sen. Francisco Tatad, who served as press secretary of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, must be color-blind.

Ask him: What could be a darker moment in our nation's history than Marcos' declaration of martial law on Sept. 21, 1972?

And the man who had read Marcos' infamous Proclamation No.

IS TATAD/ A8

Catchillar leaves behind 8 young kids

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BASISTA, Pangasinan—Navy Lt. Ricardo Catchillar may just be another "misguided man in uniform" who needed to be eliminated fast, but to his widow and eight young children, he was a good father and a hero.

Eldest brother Eddie said Rey, as Catchillar was called by relatives and friends, once told him that his Navy friends had approached him to join the Magdalo group that staged the July 27 mutiny.

"He refused," Eddie said. "My brother was never a rebellious man."

He said his family was still puzzled about why Catchillar, 38, joined former Air Transportation Office chief Panfilo Villaruel Jr. in taking over the Naia 2 control tower on Friday night.

"We're still looking for answers," he said.

CATCHILLAR/ A4

OVERKILL?

Villaruel family cries 'murder'

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

MORE THAN half of the face of former Air Transportation Office chief Panfilo Villaruel was blown off, but Malacañang and police officials insisted that the Airport Security Group's assault on the control tower of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport 2 that he and his aide seized on Friday night was not an overkill.

Villaruel, along with his aide, Navy Lt. Senior Grade Ricardo Catchillar *(See story at left)*, died when the ASG, a unit under the Philippine National Police, stormed the control tower before dawn on Saturday.

The family of Villaruel opened his coffin yesterday at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque to show that the assault was an "overkill." Villaruel's head was practically cut in half from the nose up.

In a radio interview, Villaruel's son Brix described the killing as "murder." Asked about the purported brutality of the killing, PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said: "I would say that it really happens from time to time."

A staff member of Funenaria Paz said in a radio interview that he had to use wax to try to reconstruct the shattered face. Villaruel's right arm was so riddled with bullets that it was nearly severed

VILLARUEL/ A4

PNP: Naia tower takeover may be part of plot

By Christian V. Esguerra and TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday said it was not discounting the possibility that the takeover of the control tower of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport by former Air Transportation Office chief Panfilo Villaruel and his aide was a part of another elaborate plot to seize power from the Macapagal administration.

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said this possibility was based largely on the explosives found inside the car supposedly belonging to Villaruel's bodyguard, Navy Lt. Ricardo Catchillar, several hours after the takeover.

"It is still a possibility but we are not discounting other angles such as the personality profile of Villaruel," he told reporters. "We have to find out what made him do it, his motivation."

An Army counterintelligence officer had theorized that the takeover of the control tower was part of a coup since it came on the heels of the reported recruitment of active military commanders by retired officials for a destabilization attempt.

Senior defense and military officials maintained it was not part of a coup attempt.

Chief Insp. Gerald Sison of the Airport Security Group's special operations unit who recovered the bomb, said the four pounds of TNT were enough to destroy a single-story building.

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern

PNP/ A5

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the Eastern Visayas and Northeastern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/11/03

Second FRONT PAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Palace ignores cries for Mendoza's head

By Gil C. Cabacungan
and Abigail L. Ho

MALACAÑANG yesterday ignored the mounting clamor for the resignation of top officials, particularly Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, while admitting "fatal lapses" in security that led to the takeover of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport control tower.

In a briefing, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo expressed confidence Mendoza would be able to assuage those demanding that heads roll as a result of the Naia tower siege, such as Senate President Franklin Drilon, once the DOTC chief has explained the circumstances and action taken to address the problem.

Abraham Puruganan, chair of the Presidential Task Force on Securing Critical Infrastructure, said his agency would only make recommendations on whether responsible officials should be sacked once the Philippine National Police complete its investigation into the incident.

Puruganan admitted that the incident was a "fatal lapse" on the part of officials, specifically the Air Transportation Office chief, for allowing unauthorized personnel access to the tower, especially at a time when the maximum alert level was in place.

Mendoza himself ignored calls for him to resign, saying "What I did was right."

"It's unfortunate that every time there is a major incident, people call for a resignation. But those calling for that should do some data-gathering and in-depth analysis first. I will resign if there's a need to. Let's just assess what happened. I don't intend to resign," he said.

In a press conference, Mendoza said he is ready to submit himself and his department to an investigation regarding the incident.

Mendoza ordered the assault on the control tower that led to the killing of former ATO chief Panfilo Villaruel and his aide, Navy Lt. Ricardo Catchillar.

"We feared that if such were allowed to happen, he (Villaruel) would have dragged the country into another crisis with serious implications to our economy," Mendoza stressed.

Senate President Franklin Drilon demanded Mendoza's resignation the other day for the serious security breach at the Naia control tower.

Drilon and former President Fidel Ramos called the operation an "overkill," with more than 10 police operatives sent to "neutralize" only two individuals.

"It was confirmed that they were armed. Nobody knew the quantity of explosives. We just planned to do a quick entry, get them by surprise," PNP-ASG director Senior Supt. Andres Caro, who led the assault team, said.

Mendoza added that Caro, Manila International Airport Authority general manager Edgardo Manda and MIAA assistant general manager for services Angelo Atutubo all tried to negotiate with Villaruel but failed.

Caro said he talked to Villaruel three times just before the assault on the tower.

Caro said that when the assault team blew open the steel door to the tower, they found explosive devices attached to the door. Before entering the tower, he said, the team waited for three seconds. At this point, the team allegedly heard gunfire coming from Villaruel and Catchillar. *With report from Alcuin Papa*

WELCOME TO RP
Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev waves to welcomers on his arrival yesterday at Villamor Airbase. He is in the country to explore closer economic cooperation with the Philippines. He was met by Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Nestor R. Santillan (right). ROGER MARGALLO

Group denies Villaruel was member

THE PEOPLE'S Patriotic Movement (PPM) has denied that Col. Panfilo Villaruel (ret.), who took over the Ninoy Aquino International Airport control tower on Friday, was a member of the movement.

Antonio Habana, PPM president, was reacting to two news items in the INQUIRER on Sunday and Monday which quoted Pastor "Boy" Saycon, secretary general of the Council of Philippine Affairs (Copa).

The PPM also denied that it was affiliated with Copa as Saycon had claimed in the Sunday story. Villaruel and an aide were killed after aviation police and a SWAT team stormed the control tower they had seized to protest corruption in government, among other things.

"Mr. Saycon's statement to the Philippine Daily Inquirer was malicious and wrong," Habana said.

He said the PPM has a large membership base and is composed of the following organizations: Young Nationalist Patriots, Masa Bansa, Unified Patriotic Transport Organization of the Philippines, the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM), Liga Magniniyog, Bigkis Pinoy, OFW Party, Filipino Muslim Traders Association (Filmusta), Hukvets Foundation, Supremo (NPA rebel returnees), Metro Manila Muslim Peace and Order Coordinating Council and the Umah Party (Muslim Group).

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Protests continue on day of decision in Davide case

By Blanche S. Rivera

CHURCH and militant groups in various parts of the country yesterday staged separate mass actions to protest the impeachment of Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"Absolutely shocking and nationally embarrassing," was how Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo described the impeachment move as he lambasted politicians for making the Philippines "a laughingstock abroad."

Some 1,500 religious leaders, students, government officials and employees, and senior citizens in Dagupan City released white balloons with black ribbons and black pigeons yesterday to protest the impeachment case.

The balloons and pigeons symbolized the group's mourning for the adverse effect of the impeachment on the country, they said.

The protesters led by Agco, a multi-sectoral group headed by Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, gathered at the city plaza to express their indignation over the "arrogance and self-serving actions" of the lawmakers who initiated the impeachment complaint.

Cruz said if Congress would transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate despite a decision that the case was unconstitutional, the congressmen must be cited for contempt.

"Then the executive branch must put the congressmen in jail," he said, foreseeing a messy situation in the country if the Articles of Impeachment were transmitted.

In Davao City, militants led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan staged a rally yesterday to reiterate its call for Congress to junk what they called the "GMA-Danding Impeachment Deal."

The protesters, who gathered at Jones Circle along Roxas Avenue, called on Congress to withdraw the impeachment complaint.

Jeppie Ramada, Bayan spokesperson for Southern Mindanao, said Davide's impeachment case is "tainted with the blood and sweat of Filipino farmers who stand to be affected by this attack against the judiciary that upheld (a case) in their favor."

In Zamboanga City, more than 1,000 people marched to express their support for Davide.

"This rally is not solely for Davide, this is an expression to protect the Constitution," Ronnie Lledo, one of the rally speakers, said.

The rally participants included students and faculty of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University, Western Mindanao State University, Pilar College and members of Couples for Christ, Akbayan, Freedom from Debt Coalition and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines. *With reports from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Anthony S. Allada and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Employers see more jobless next year

EMPLOYERS are predicting a higher unemployment rate for the country next year, with political instability discouraging foreign investors from coming in.

Donald Dee, president of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, said the situation in April and May 2004 would be worse than in the same period this year, with the influx of fresh college graduates and the absence of new opportunities.

"There (has been) hardly any substantial expansion or investments, and there were even job losses," Dee said in an interview after the El Shaddai-led prayer rally in Manila on Sunday. "Businessmen will not put their money where there is instability."

Dee also ruled out the possibility of wage increases, saying it would be "anti-labor" at this point. He said the focus of the government and the private and labor sectors should be the preservation and creation of jobs.

Miguel Varela, chair emeritus of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, suggested: "Maybe the government should concentrate not so much on new investments but on keeping the ones we still have."

The country's current unemployment rate is 11.2 percent, down from 13 percent in April and May this year, but still one of the highest in Southeast Asia.

Dee said foreign investors were looking to China, where labor is cheaper owing to the low cost of living. He said this should jolt local politicians into working for better services and to stop Filipinos' cost of living from further rising.

The country has a work force of 34 million, plus some seven million overseas Filipino workers around the world. *Blanche S. Rivera*

2nd Filipina hurt in Saudi bombing

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday reported that another Filipina was among the 122 people injured in last Sunday's bomb blast in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which killed 17 people.

DFA Secretary Blas Ople said the name of the second Filipina would be announced as soon as her relatives had been informed. A third Filipina, who also worked in the 200-villa Muhaya complex, is still being tracked down by the Philippine embassy.

Witnesses described the blast in the middle of the holy month of Ramadan as a suicide bombing, but it was not clear if only one bomber was involved.

Ople earlier confirmed that Lolita Montealto, 32, a native of Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte, had suffered a broken arm and was in the hospital. The other Filipina was reportedly treated for minor hand wounds and has been discharged.

Julie Heidenmann, head of the DFA public information service unit, said Montealto told embassy officials that a third Filipina, a domestic helper known only as Reilyn, may have also been injured.

Heidenmann said the embassy has not determined the exact number of overseas Filipino workers in the residential compound.

The Saudi interior ministry said the dead included seven Lebanese, four Egyptians, one Saudi and one Sudanese. It has not announced the nationalities of the remaining four fatalities. Of the 17, five were children.

Apart from the Filipinos, the ministry listed the wounded as Bangladeshis, Egyptians, Eritreans, Ethiopians, Indians, Indonesians, Jordanians, Lebanese, Pakistanis, Palestinians, Romanians, Saudis, Sri Lankans, Sudanese, Syrians, and Turks, as well as four Americans and six Canadians mostly of Arab descent.

Ople said the Philippine embassy in Riyadh and consulate general in Jeddah would remain open. Before the attack, the United States declared a temporary shutdown of its embassy in the Saudi capital, citing intelligence reports of an imminent terror attack.

"The need to look after the safety and welfare of almost one million Filipinos there forecloses any possibility of closing our outposts," Ople said.

But he maintained "there continues to be no specific terrorist threats against Filipinos or any Philippine interests in Saudi Arabia." In fact, he added, plans for President Macapagal-Arroyo to visit Saudi Arabia were on track.

Ms Macapagal yesterday expressed the country's condolences to the Saudi people.

"This bombing only proves that terrorism is relentless and it should strengthen our resolve to work with all nations, especially where Filipinos reside, to forestall terror," she said in a statement.

Saudi officials vowed not to rest until the perpetrators, "who claim to be Muslim," were captured. *With Juliet L. Javellana and a report from AFP*

GMA orders bonuses released

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

WILL PROTESTING government employees be sobered by the release of their remaining yearend bonus and cash gifts?

President Macapagal-Arroyo's deputy spokesperson Ricardo Saludo yesterday announced that the Chief Executive has ordered the payment of the remaining 50 percent of all government employees' yearend bonuses, representing half of their monthly salaries, and a P2,500 cash gift.

The 1.4-million government employees received the first 50 percent of the bonus last June.

Saludo said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin assured the employees that P8.5 billion has been "made available" for the payment of the bonuses.

He said the government workers would receive their bonus on Nov. 16, in accordance with the guidelines which state that this should be paid between Nov. 16 and 30.

All government employees, including contractuals, will receive the bonus, Saludo said.

"The bonus will be paid to officials and employees of all national governments and agencies, state universities and colleges, government-owned and controlled corporations, government financial institutions and local government units regardless of the nature of their appointment, whether permanent, temporary or emergency in nature and including contractual employees who perform the functions of regular employees," Saludo said.

He said Boncodin also authorized the LGUs, GFIs and GOCCs to source these benefits from their own funds.

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Villaruel was fired by Palace

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

FORMER Air Transportation Office chief Col. Panfilo Villaruel Jr. was fired by Malacañang and stripped of his benefits nearly five months before he took over the control tower of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport 2 on Friday.

Manuel B. Gaite, acting deputy executive secretary for legal affairs, said that based on the Philippine Anti-Graft Commission's findings, "Villaruel is hereby dismissed from the service and imposed the accessory penalties of forfeiture of financial benefits and disqualification from entering government service." The dismissal of Villaruel was based on a resolution of the Office of the President dated June 10.

Five years ago, the PAGC found Villaruel guilty of grave misconduct for the unlawful suspension of complainant Gomersindo M. Domingo from the Philippine Aerospace Development Corp.

The case was earlier recommended for dismissal for being moot because Villaruel had resigned from the PADC. But PAGC chair Eufemio C. Domingo argued that there was no proof that Villaruel had resigned. Also, the retirement of respondent Villaruel from government service was not a hindrance to the imposition of penalties by the PAGC.

This was why Gaite ordered that all leaves and retirement benefits to which Villaruel was entitled be forfeited and returned to the government.

COL. Panfilo Villaruel poses proudly in front of his creation, a prototype of a fighter plane. REPRO PHOTO BY ROGER MARGALLO

CATCHILLAR: He refused to join the Magdalo group, said his brother. TV GRAB/CHANNEL 7

HIS FATHER'S son, Frederick, one of three sons (and three daughters) of the former aviation chief, Panfilo Villaruel, keeps vigil at the Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will be on Thursday, Nov. 13 at high noon. ROGER MARGALLO

Catchillar ...

From page A1

Neighbors milled around the Catchillars' house in Barangay Osmeña here, condoling with the Navy officer's wife Maria Luz, eight children, 14 siblings and their father Prudencio.

They were deeply hurt when a police assault team shot and killed Catchillar and Villaruel, a Philippine Air Force reservist and assistant transportation secretary from 1992 to 1996, although they were reportedly ready to surrender.

"They were not given a chance. With other [rebels], there were negotiations. Why did they not give him the same privilege?" Eddie said.

As Catchillar's children waited for his body to be brought back from Manila, they could not help but wonder what the future holds for them.

'Basang sisiw'

They were also confused about the circumstances behind their father's death.

The two women whom Catchillar loved most—his wife and his mother Jovita—went to pick up the body in Manila.

"*Mga basang sisiw*" could aptly describe the Catchillar kids—Carlo, 16; Richie, 15; Maricris, 13; Marichelle, 11; James, 10; Mary Joy, 7; Marife, 5, and Ricardo Jr., 2.

Catchillar's job in the Navy hardly allowed him to come home to his family. Only text messages and telephone calls linked him to his wife and children.

Carlo, a third year high school student, said the last time his father was home was in September when he told him to take care of his younger siblings. "He was always advising me to be a good boy. We did not only lose a loving father, but a good provider as well."

Catchillar might not have earned enough from being a Navy officer to provide for the needs of his brood, so on the side he sold Forever Living products, a line of vitamins and other health food supplements.

When he was home months back, he gave his two company ID cards to his wife so she could sell the health products, too.

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Leandro Mendoza (in white barong) defends the storming of the Naia control tower. With Mendoza are, from left, Naia general manager Ed Manda, Sr. Supt. Andres Caro, who led the assault, Naia assistant GM Angel Atutubo and ATO chief Nilo Jatico. JOAN BONDOC

Villaruel family cries 'murder'

From page A1

from the body, the morgue attendant said.

"(These wounds) must have been caused by the high caliber of our guns. Our men were armed with baby Armalites," said Senior Supt. Andres Caro, chief of the PNP-Airport Security Group who led the assault.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the assault was not an overkill. "The assault team used the proper amount of force to obviate resistance."

Ms Macapagal warned that she would not hesitate to use "extreme force" in dealing with anybody who "crosses the line of the law."

The President said Villaruel was killed not because he was a whistle-blower (he ranted about the worsening corruption and ineptitude in government) but because he was committing a serious act against the security of the nation.

Condoling

"A national security installation was under threat and it is incumbent upon the authorities to immediately act to regain command and control of it by the most expeditious means, including the use of extreme force," she said in a statement.

Condoling with Villaruel's family, Ms Macapagal said the former ATO chief "may have had noble intentions but he crossed the line of the law and dearly paid for it."

Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. also condoled with the families of Villaruel and Catchillar but said "the government has a duty to perform in the national interest of the country."

Senators horrified

Horrified by the outcome of the siege of the airport tower, three senators each filed a resolution yesterday calling for a Senate inquiry into the incident. The resolutions seek to determine two things: how security of vital installations like the Naia 2 tower could have been breached and whether the police followed the rules of engagement.

At a press briefing, Caro said members of the ASG's special weapons and tactics team had to attack Villaruel and Catchillar with guns blazing after they were met with gunshots instead of shouts of surrender inside the air traffic control center.

"We didn't know what they had with them, if they had explosives or high-powered guns. It was also dark," Caro told newsmen, admitting that the airport's primary police force had yet to be equipped with night-vision goggles.

Negative for powder burns

Villaruel and Catchillar tested negative for powder burns but results of a ballistic test on two pistols found at the control tower indicated that they had fired shots, Ebdane said.

Ebdane explained that paraffin and ballistic tests could sometimes yield conflicting results, owing largely to the type of gun used. Since Villaruel and Catchillar used a 9-mm and a .45 cal. automatic pistols, neither one showed traces of gunpowder because residue from pistols are usually blown upward upon firing, the police chief said.

Unanswered questions

By presenting only the results of the ballistic and paraffin tests, Ebdane left unanswered questions surrounding the killing of the retired Air Force captain, who claimed he wanted only to air his gripes, and his security aide.

The PNP chief refused to say how many shots hit Villaruel and Catchillar. Chief Supt. Restituto Mosqueda, chief of the PNP Crime Laboratory, was unavailable for comment.

Mendoza order

Caro said the assault team immediately went up to take out Villaruel after he received the order from Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, head of the crisis management team that dealt with the Naia tower takeover.

Caro said that there were two assault teams, each made up of around six men, who went up the tower. He and Naia assistant general manager for security, Angel Atutubo, went up with them up to the 11th floor.

"After the controlled blast that threw the control center's door open, the (first) team went inside. We were shouting 'go, go, go,'" Caro recounted.

"The point man then saw that the entrance to the center was further blocked by chairs. And when he started removing them, he saw wires. We thought the place was booby-trapped with explosives," he added.

False trap

The team had to withdraw for about three to four minutes after seeing the wires, according to Caro. He said that after they determined the wired entrance was a false trap, the team went into the air traffic control center and began firing into the dark office.

All along, Caro said, his team didn't hear Villaruel's shouts of surrender. In a radio interview with GMA anchor Arnold Clavio shortly before he was killed, Villaruel shouted, "We surrender!" just as the assault team blew up the door of the control room and went in for the kill.

2 minutes

"They were met with volleys of gunfire. When the firing stopped, we found the bodies of Villaruel and his aide," Caro said.

The re-taking of the tower saw no more need for the second six-man team on standby. "The assault lasted for about two minutes, maybe even less," Caro said.

Negotiation

Sympathizers claimed that the crisis could have been settled peacefully had authorities only conducted negotiations with the renegades and their families. Villaruel had expressed despair over government corruption and what he described as the aimless drift of the country.

"Despite all my efforts to call the attention of the Congress, the Senate and the military, no one listens, so now maybe they will listen," he told dzBB. "I am not here to grab power. I just want to tell you that the Philippines will not go anywhere."

Ebdane said officers on the ground had tried to negotiate by asking Villaruel's wife Maritess to talk to her husband. But Villaruel could not be reached through his cellular phone despite repeated calls, he said.

Driver

Authorities, he said, had also talked to Villaruel's driver who drove him and Catchillar to the control tower. He said the driver had informed police that only Villaruel and his aide were holed up in the control room.

In a report to Mendoza, Caro said he had talked to Villaruel three times just before the assault on the tower. Caro quoted Villaruel as saying, "Andy *ano ba ito* (What's this)? Nobody can stop me now. Andy *nasaan ka* (Where are you)? I know you're doing your job but I'll blow this tower."

Lt. Gen. Nestor Santillan, Air Force chief, disclosed that he too managed to contact Villaruel during the stand-off, but the latter was not keen on talking. "I asked him how I could help him and why he was doing this, and he replied: 'You will know first thing in the morning,'" he recalled at a separate conference in Camp Aguinaldo.

No security breach

ATO chief Nilo Jatico said there was no breach in security at the tower because as former ATO chief, Villaruel was given due courtesy by ATO employees on Friday night. Jatico added that Villaruel "abused" the trust given to him by the ATO employees.

Jatico said what Villaruel did was a "terroristic act" because he threatened to blow up the tower.

The seizure of the air control tower could have degenerated into an international crisis had the police not acted swiftly, Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said. "Had that incident been allowed to last until 4 a.m., when the flights started coming in, and supposing they gave the wrong information, the planes could have collided." *With reports from Norman Bordadora, TJ Burgonio, Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño*

SOUTHERN police chief Jose Gutierrez, left photo, presents to the media C4 plastic explosives and guns allegedly recovered from the abandoned car of Navy Lt. Catchillar. PNP Crime Laboratory Sr. Inspector Emma Galero, above, inspects Catchillar's vehicle at the PNP Southern Police District headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

JOAN BONDOC/RUDY ESPERAS

PNP: Naia tower takeover may be part of plot

From page A1

Police District director, said the explosives, "if strategically placed," could level the 12-story control tower of Naia 2.

A ranking military official yesterday confirmed that Villaruel's decision to seize the tower was anything but an isolated case of a man wanting desperately to condemn rampant corruption in government.

Having monitored the purported recruitment of active military officers by retired officials for another coup, the officer claimed that the takeover of the control tower was scheduled for last night, in time for the mass actions expected in connection with the Supreme Court ruling on the impeachment case against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Red alert

On Sunday evening, the military again raised the red alert to quell any violence that might arise from the possible transmittal of the impeachment complaint against Davide from the House of the Representatives to the Senate. At press time, House Speaker Jose de Venecia decided not to transmit the Articles of Impeachment.

"The Armed Forces had declared a red alert… in anticipation of any developments that might occur as a result of what is expected to be the transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment from Congress to the Senate," Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, Armed Forces vice chief of staff, said at a press briefing.

The military declared a red alert on Tuesday last week to quell violent rallies by groups supporting or opposed to the impeachment of Davide. It lifted this two days later after noting "no significant mass action."

Premature move

Following the takeover of the air control tower at Naia by Villaruel and his aide, President Macapagal-Arroyo placed on Saturday the military on "maximum alert."

"He's really idealistic and was overshadowed by his frustrations so he decided to move prematurely," the source told the Inquirer, referring to Villaruel.

Those behind the alleged plot, he claimed, were expecting the Supreme Court to declare unconstitutional the impeachment complaint, thereby fueling the mass actions by members of a group identified with former President Joseph Estrada, another one with Sen. Gregorio Honasan, and still another group that was initially supportive but later became a fierce critic of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Quoting a longtime member of the National ROTC Alumni Association which Villaruel once headed, the source said part of the alleged plan was the walkout of pro-impeachment congressmen, an act purportedly intended to reprise the 2001 walkout of private prosecutors in the Estrada impeachment trial that eventually triggered the second Edsa revolt.

7-man junta

Had the plan been carried out and become successful, the source said the plotters would have installed a seven-man junta composed of four military officials and three civilians.

Honasan, who was tagged as the mastermind of the failed power grab on July 27, was excluded from the junta because the plotters "didn't like him," the military officer said.

But Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao, the PNP intelligence chief, yesterday denied that police had monitored any fresh destabilization efforts against Ms Macapagal. Lt. Col. Danilo Lucero, military information officer, earlier described as a "figment of the imagination" reports that the Naia siege was part of a coup.

As if to show that there was really no coup, Ebdane said PNP units nationwide were under normal alert, besides those in Metro Manila which are under a heightened alert level because of mass actions related to the Davide impeachment case.

Gas station

In the absence of substantial evidence of another coup, Ebdane said police would focus on the investigation of Catchillar's green Mitsubishi Galant sedan which was recovered at the Caltex service station in Merville, Parañaque City, shortly after 9 p.m. on Saturday.

The PNP chief noted that Catchillar had "acquired some skills" from the Navy's elite Special Warfare Group. Catchillar had trained briefly with the group.

When he arrived at the gas station to check on the vehicle, ASG's Sison said he saw two sets of TNT plastered cubes on the front passenger seat. He said the bombs were assembled in such a way that they were "ready to explode."

Garcia said that the re-declaration of the red alert had nothing to do with rumors of another coup attempt or military adventurism by groups wanting to take advantage of the political standoff.

Main causes

He said that the anti-destabilization Task Force Libra and other civil disturbance units were on standby in Camp Aguinaldo for possible deployment.

Ms Macapagal yesterday said the continuing friction between Edsa II and Edsa III forces was among the main causes of the persistent destabilization threats against her administration.

The President was swept into power by Edsa II forces—mainly composed of the upper and middle classes—who drove out Estrada from Malacañang in January 2001. In April the same year, the masses loyal to Estrada staged their own version of people power on Edsa and launched an attack on Malacañang.

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THE UNITED States Embassy and its affiliated offices will be closed today in observance of Veterans Day, an American holiday.

China violated Spratlys accord, says AFP

By TJ Burgonio

ARMED Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya yesterday said that China violated a "status quo agreement" among countries, including the Philippines, that are claiming the Spratly islands by setting up markers in unoccupied islands and reefs in the disputed area.

"I think it is (a violation of the agreement)," Abaya said at a briefing at the Department of National Defense, but pointed out that troops of the Western Command in Palawan dismantled the markers after they were put up.

He said however, the military saw no need to recommend the filing of a diplomatic protest with China since the markers had been removed.

Abaya and other senior military officials conducted an aerial inspection of the Kalayaan group of islands aboard a C-130 plane on Thursday morning.

"After the markers were removed, they did not put them up again. I don't think there is a need for any diplomatic protests," Abaya said.

During the overflight, Vice Admiral Ruben Domingo, Westcom chief, noted that the military often noticed some markers with Chinese inscriptions in some idle reefs, shoals and cays, and immediately removed them.

China and the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-including four of the Spratlys claimants which include Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam-signed a landmark accord in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in November 2002 calling on all the claimants to avoid actions which may heighten tensions there.

Abaya also maintained that there was no intrusion on Philippine territory or occupied islands by any of the claimant-countries following the sighting of two ships, including a frigate, in the China-claimed Mischief Reef during the overflight.

"There is no such intrusion into other island territory by other claimant-countries. It's very clear that they are more inside that lagoon in Mischief Reef. That whole Mischief Reef is occupied by the Chinese," he said.

Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita agreed with Abaya, saying, "There is no intrusion on Philippine waters or an area that is being protested."

The Spratlys, which are believed to be rich in oil and other mineral resources, are being claimed in whole or in part by the Philippines, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Nurses warn of health crisis

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINE Nurses Association yesterday warned of a serious health crisis by 2006 if the massive exodus, which has reached up to 40 percent, of the country's skilled nurses for higher-paying jobs abroad continues.

"Two years from now, we will face a serious public health crisis because our nurses are going abroad... This is also made worse because some of our doctors are diverting to nursing courses to find jobs elsewhere," PNA president for the National Capital Region Elsie de Veyra told reporters yesterday at the International Conference on Challenges in Health Work Amidst Globalization and War .

The PNA's warning topped the previous concerns aired by the Department of Health . and other government agencies which noted that inexperienced health workers were the ones left in the country.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration estimated that there are around 300,000 Filipino nurses employed in 131 countries around the world.

More Filipino nurses are expected to leave the country as the demand for nurses goes up to fill 50,000 vacancies in the next 10 to 15 years.

De Veyra noted that even fresh nursing graduates were pursuing jobs in other countries, with 50 to 70 percent of them leaving the Philippines soon after school.

The Alliance of Health Workers said the United States and Canada projected a demand for 10,000 nurses a year; the Netherlands, 44,000; the United Kingdom, 15,000, Ireland, 50,000; Saudi Arabia, 15,000; and Norway, 5,500.

Most recruiters attract Filipino nurses with an immigration package that allows them to take their families along with them.

Asian countries like Japan, Singapore, Korea and Taiwan are also starting to hire Filipino nurses and caregivers as well.

IN THE TEXTING CAPITAL
President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomes Motorola corporate vice president and general manager Scott Durchlag to Malacañang. Durchlag is in the country to see for himself the texting capital of the world and how cellular phone maker Motorola could further exploit this.

Knee surgery for Imelda?

WHAT ERAP wants, Imelda may get.

Former first lady Imelda Marcos' doctors in London are currently discussing whether or not to operate on both of her knees due to arthritis.

According to a source close to the 75-year-old Marcos, an operation could mean she would not be able to come home on or before Nov. 12, the return date stipulated in her travel authority.

The doctors have yet to decide if she should make the journey home, the source said.

Marcos has reportedly recovered from dehydration, and is now staying at the plush Dorchester Hotel in the British capital.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) yesterday said it was coordinating with the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) in filing cases against Imelda before the Sandiganbayan for violating her travel authority.

The widow of strongman Ferdinand Marcos is facing graft charges and is out on bail.

PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza said he was preparing a motion to cite Marcos in contempt, and another to cancel her bail and issue a warrant of arrest.

"Whether or not she undergoes an operation, the fact remains that she violated her travel authority by extending her stay," Carranza told the Inquirer.

The courts earlier allowed Imelda to travel to the United States and Europe for religious and medical purposes, for one month beginning Oct. 2. She left on Oct. 5.

Her lawyers soon asked for an extension, saying doctors needed more time to do tests. *Alcuin Papa*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, November 11, 2003
32nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Wis 2:23-3:9
Gospel: Lk 17:7-10

The Lord said, "Who among you would say to your servant coming in from the fields after plowing or tending sheep: 'Come at once and sit down at table'? No, you tell him: 'Prepare my dinner. Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink; you can eat and drink afterwards.' Do you thank this servant for doing what you commanded? So for you. When you have done all that you have been told to do, you. must say: 'We are no more than servants; we have only done our duty.'"

Commentary

"In the eyes of the unwise they appear to be dead. Their going is held as a disaster; it seems that they lose everything by departing from us, but they are in peace." During the funeral rites of a Franciscan chaplain of the New York Fire Department who died while ministering the last rites to the dying victims at the World Trade Center September 11, 2001 tragedy, the Provincial Superior said the following words: "We are burying today the body of Fr. Michael but not his spirit, we are burying his hands but not his good deeds, we are burying his heart but not his love." Truly the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God and their good deeds will survive and will become beacons to the succeeding generations.

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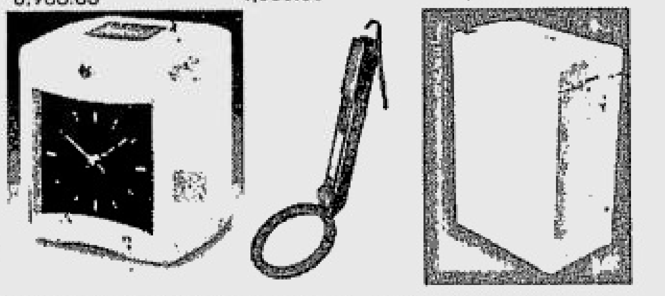

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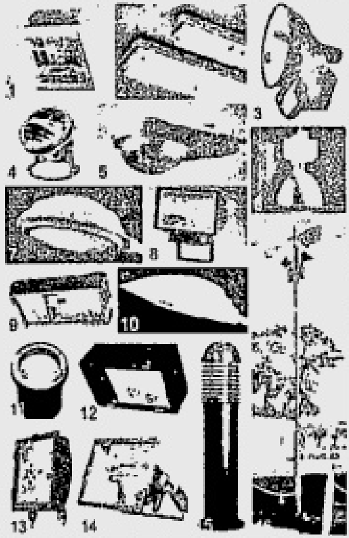

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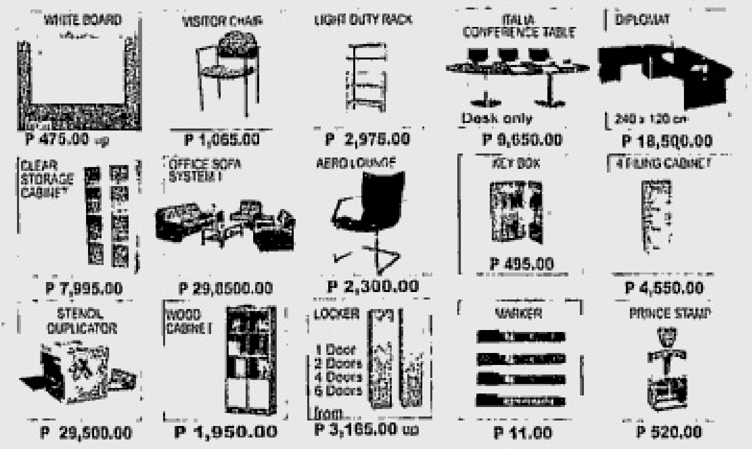

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Eclipse was time for unity, prayer

TAGAYTAY CITY—It was more than a lunar eclipse.

At exactly 8:13 p.m. last Saturday, 22 men and women burned incense, candles and pieces of paper on which they had written down good wishes, on a stone oracle at the center of their circle.

They were participants in a ritual prayer for unity cast in time for the planetary alignment called Star of David, believed to create "a rip in heaven," a phenomenon that happens once in 2,012 years.

The ritual, held in the garden of Marina's Home Bistro in Barangay West Mendez here, had the participants lighting candles and praying for peace, since the planet formation is said to be a "very powerful period for all forces, both good and evil."

"We created the circle for the unity prayer to (invoke) good," said astrologer Jackie Javellana, who led the ritual.

Despite winds blowing from all directions, the light in the candles never went out.

Change of consciousness

Javellana explained: "The six major planets form the sextile or six-point star (in 60- and 120-degree distances from each other) which we call the Star of David phenomenon. This ushers in a period of massive change of consciousness that results in what is interpreted as a rip in heaven."

She said the power of that anticipated fissure made her and artist Popo San Pascual decide to perform the ritual with friends. The 22 people in the circle were businessmen, artists and professionals from different parts of the country. Many of them knew one another, while others met for the first time. Majority joined the ritual for the first time. Two were Americans.

Javellana said the circle signified consciousness of the New Age and mastery of higher learning. But she warned of the cycle that follows this Star of David.

"The planet Mars, which is now in Pisces, will move to Aries between Dec. 16 and 18," the astrologer said. "Mars is the god of war. When it moves to Aries, there will be a karmic descending cycle—this means bad things to come."

The last time Mars was in Aries, she pointed out, was during the impeachment trial of deposed president Joseph Estrada, which led to Edsa II.

"Reinforced by the Star of David, Mars in Aries could mean bigger troubles, maybe in the coming elections," Javellana said.

Only love and prayers could oppose the negativity, she said, "so we are imploring people to pray in groups. Prayers could (avert) troubles."

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Despite crises, more tourists came to RP

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINES climbed into the black in tourist arrival figures for the months of September and October and the first nine days of November, the Department of Tourism reported.

Following the downtrend in tourist arrivals early this year following the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Asia, DOT figures showed a month-on-month increase of 2.5 percent for September, 9 percent for October and 9.5 percent as of Nov. 9.

The DOT, however, did not disclose exactly how many tourists arrived.

"The SARS outbreak was a terrible, but not insurmountable, blow to the Asian tourism industry in general," said Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon.

Gordon was recently given an award by a Thai regional travel magazine for his efforts in helping the tourism industry during the SARS crisis.

"We worked hard to contain the epidemic here in the Philippines and we were successful to the point that our country was spared from the devastating effects suffered by our neighbors, whose tourism arrivals dropped to as low as -70 percent month-on-month," Gordon said.

He said the Philippines was able to halt the downtrend at -32 percent, after which the rates steadily surged again.

"What is important is to avoid the stigmatization of our country and our region and to restore confidence in us as a tourism destination so that tourists will keep on coming," Gordon said.

During the crisis, the secretary protested travel advisories imposed on the region by developed countries. He said he understood the need of foreign governments to protect their citizens, but such advisories should have been location-specific, accurate and constantly updated and reviewed so that they would not hurt another country's tourism industry.

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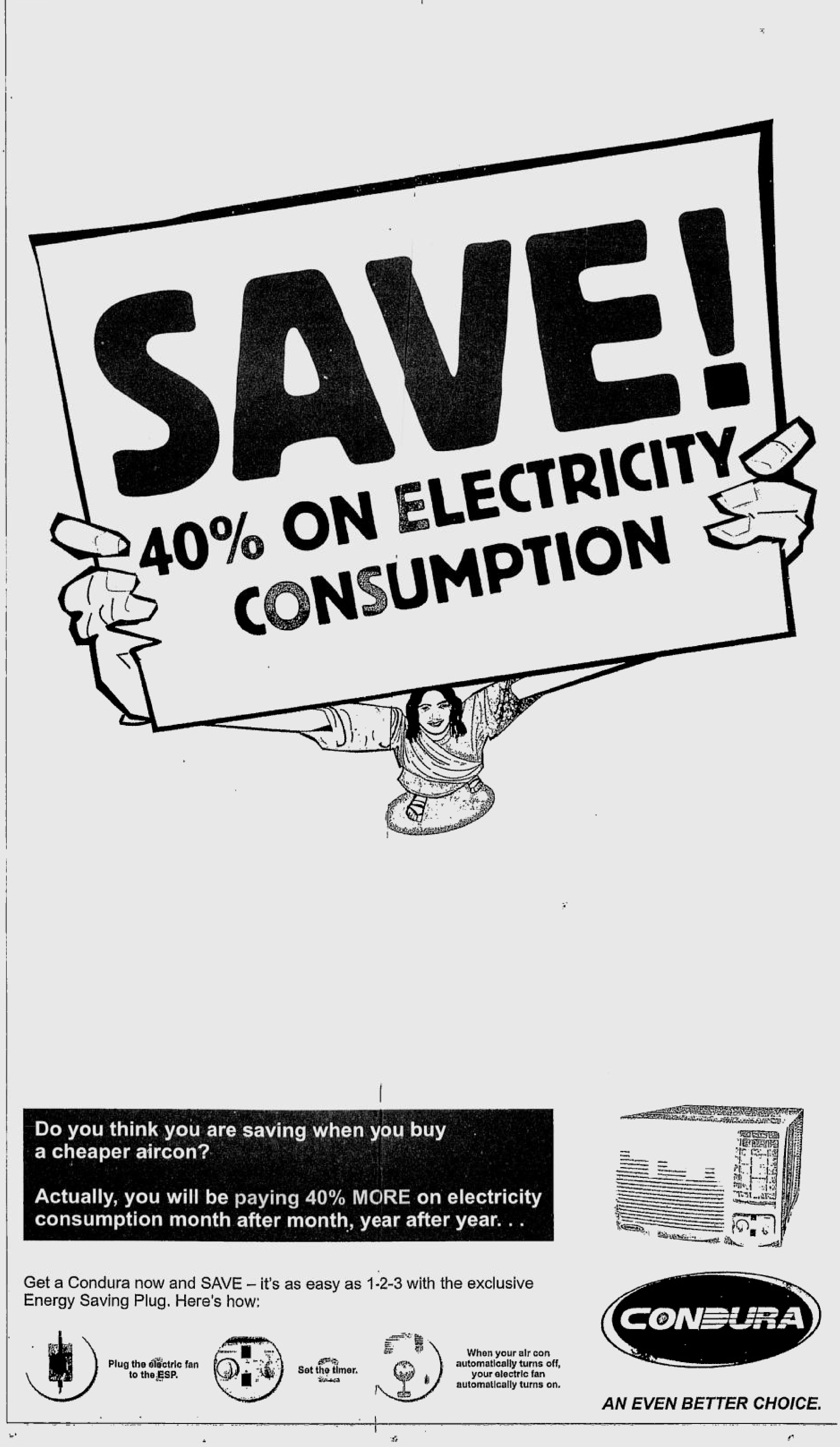
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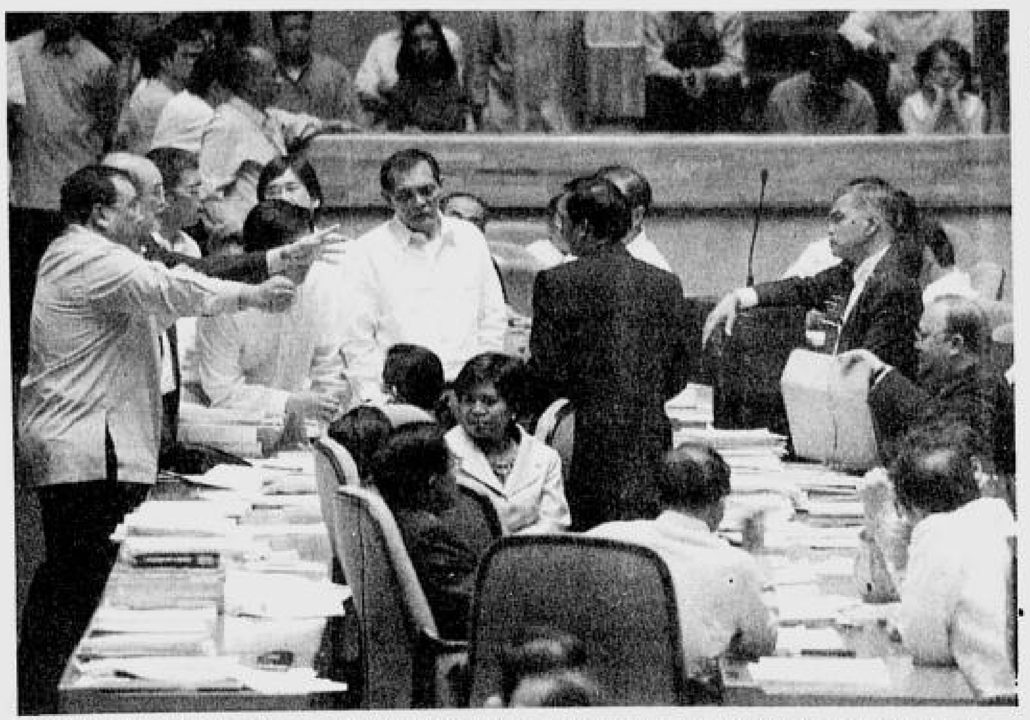
House bows to Supreme Court

From page A1

the Speaker's rostrum, but afterwards opposition Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, of deposed President Joseph Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino, moved to have all positions in Congress, including the Speaker's, declared vacant. After a short suspension of the session, however, Dilangalen withdrew his motion. *(Story on Page A1).*

Dilangalen then moved that the House overturn De Venecia's ruling to abide by the SC. As of press time, the nominal voting of the 188 congressmen present was ongoing, with 49 representatives voting to uphold the SC decision and 27 against. The roll call had only reached the letter F as in Fuentebella. Each representative was given three minutes to explain his vote, but the trend appeared to be to respect the Supreme Court decision.

But the pro-impeachment congressmen still had more than the 76 signatures needed to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.



HOUSE Majority Floor Leader Neptali Gonzales Jr. replies to a point raised by Rep. Didagen Dilanggalen as other lawmakers listen at the House last night. EDWIN BACASMAS

Caucus decision

The confusion and tension in the House last night was in stark contrast to the confidence House leaders displayed early yesterday.

Emerging from a multi-party caucus at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City, De Venecia said the House will abide by the Supreme Court's decision because it recognized its authority to decide on the constitutionality or non-constitutionality of laws or rules.

He told reporters that the caucus, where 140 congressmen or a majority of the House roll, participated, showed overwhelming support for the high court's decision.

Another House leader, Batanes Rep. Butch Abad of the Liberal Party, said the caucus had agreed to block further moves to transmit the complaint to the Senate for trial.

"We will respect that (Supreme Court) decision and we will abide by it," Abad told ABS-CBN television.

Warning

Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero, NPC spokesperson, said his party accepted the court ruling. He warned, however, that the justices should bear full responsibility "should there be anarchy in the streets."

The NPC was founded by businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., its chair emeritus.

The caucus was ongoing when the participants learned of the Supreme Court's decision.

"We have not lost face because two-thirds of the House did not participate in the impeachment complaint. We were never participants in the impeachment complaint. It's only slightly more than one-third (who) were insisting on the impeachment complaint," De Venecia said.

He said that while the House leadership respects the decision of one-third of its members, the majority had decided to respect the Supreme Court.

Bridges of understanding

He said, however, that those who initiated the impeachment of Davide acted in good faith.

"We have to respect the one-third who signed the complaint. We can disagree without being disagreeable. We should keep the bridges of understanding intact," he said.

The Speaker said the House committee on rules will need to review the rules on impeachment because this was not the first time that a law passed by the Senate or the House has been struck down as unconstitutional.

"This is the way our democracy functions, the way our constitutional system is built," De Venecia said.

But another Lakas lawmaker took a hardline stance. "We don't care about the court decision," said Rep. Jacinto Paras, who crossed party lines to endorse the impeachment complaint against Davide.

"We have already ruled that we will not recognize it (the court ruling)," he said.

Draft manifesto

Before the session opened at 4 p.m., a draft manifesto started circulating among congressmen, expressing both regret and a sense of betrayal over the decision handed down by the high court regarding questions raised over the second impeachment complaint.

But during the plenary, De Venecia laid down what appeared to be the official line that the Lakas-led majority bloc would impose on the entire chamber: "I am constrained to respect the decision of the Supreme Court."

Vigorous reactions

His ruling drew vigorous reaction from the gallery.

On the left side facing the Speaker's rostrum were two thousand court employees in red who went on leave to protest alleged abuses in the disbursement of the Judiciary Development Fund, a multibillion-peso fund administered solely by the Chief Justice.

The employees wore red shirts printed with large letters that read "JDF: Justice Davide's Fund."

On the right were members of religious organizations and civil society groups, who sported black, the signature color of protest against the Davide impeachment.

Outside the hall, protesters from both sides of the divide eyeballed each other before the session started.

Erap supporters

There were supporters of ex-President Joseph Estrada and other groups that support the Davide impeachment.

Militant groups led by mainstream Left organizations like the Kilusang Mayo Uno also mobilized in support of the continued investigation of the JDF but also in protest against the impeachment, which they blamed on congressmen identified with Cojuangco.

Before noon, hundreds of anti-riot police deployed along the stretch of Batasan Road starting at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue.

A police command tent was set up at the head of the center island opening up to Batasan Road, while Special Weapons and Tactics vehicles were parked in intervals leading to the sprawling Batasan Complex.

Anti-riot police

At the entrance to the Batasan's iron gate, a phalanx of fully suited up anti-riot police stood watch as pro- and anti-Davide groups stared at each other.

At lunch time, buses filled with Davide supporters, including nuns, entered the gate and they started waiting for the session hall to open up.

By 3:30 p.m., the gallery was packed. Nine minutes later, De Venecia's spouse Georgina took her seat in the front gallery.

Even House employees took an early break to watch the proceedings.

At exactly 4 p.m., De Venecia called the session to order. It became clear that the magnitude of the Davide impeachment issue had changed the way things are done in the House—at least for the day.

Where before the calling of the roll was like the hearing somebody annotating a horse race at rapid clip, the House secretary general took the time to pronounce each and every name of lawmakers on the roll.

A total of 188 responded to the call, or 74 more than the required 114 to establish a quorum.

President's support

In Malacañang, the President sent an unmistakable signal.

Saying there will be a crisis if the Supreme Court's ruling was not upheld, President Macapagal-Arroyo vowed to enforce the high court's decision.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo appeared in a rare Palace briefing to convey Malacañang's "full and wholehearted support to the overwhelming majority" decision.

Ms Macapagal said it was her "solemn duty" as President to respect the decision of the high tribunal and to "enforce any directives issued by it."

"Let no one misunderstand or doubt our resolve to preserve and protect the Constitution," the President said in a statement she read in Camp Crame shortly after the high court's decision was broadcast in media.

"We did not come this far in our long history as a nation to establish a constitutional democracy just to tinker with its basic principles," she asserted.

But the President said she remained hopeful that the high court and Congress would "act with congruence and faith and with the highest national interest in mind."

Don't ignore SC order

"We have prayed all along for unity and reconciliation and we trust in the noble intentions of everyone involved," she said.

The President insisted that a "principled covenant is still the best way forward."

Asked if she believed that a national crisis would ensue if the high tribunal ruled the impeachment unconstitutional, the President said: "There will only be a crisis if we ignore the order of the Supreme Court."

The ruling Lakas party hailed the decision as a "triumph of the rule of law" which effectively averted a constitutional crisis.

Lakas spokesman Heherson Alvarez said the decision showed how decisive and strong the Supreme Court was.

"The Supreme Court has used its mandate wisely. By ruling that the second impeachment complaint filed against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. was unconstitutional, the Supreme Court gives an assuring signal of our capacity as a democratic nation to address strategic issues and conflicts through the rule of law," Alvarez said in a press statement. ***With reports from Juliet Javellana, AFP***

'Unconstitutional'

From page A1

"Adjudication may not be declined, because the court is not legally disqualified. Nor can jurisdiction be renounced as there is no other tribunal to which the controversy may be referred," the SC said. "More than being clothed with authority thus, this court is duty-bound to take cognizance of the instant petitions. In the august words of amicus curiae Father (Joaquin) Bernas (SJ), 'jurisdiction is not just a power; it is a solemn duty which may not be renounced. To renounce it, even if vexatious, would be a dereliction of duty'."

Respect for decision

The high court said it believed that the House would respect its decision.

"Yet there is no reason to believe that any of the branches of government will behave in a precipitate manner and risk social upheaval, violence, chaos and anarchy by encouraging disrespect for the fundamental law of the land."

The court said the prospect of a constitutional crisis should not deter it from ruling on the issue.

"As correctly stated by the Solicitor General, the possibility of the occurrence of a constitutional crisis is not a reason for this Court to refrain from upholding the Constitution in all impeachment cases. Justices cannot abandon their constitutional duties just because their action may start, if not precipitate, a crisis," the SC said.

"Such an argument ... also presumes that the coordinate branches of the government would behave in a lawless manner and not do their duty under the law to uphold the Constitution and obey the laws of the land."

The court also noted that resorting to extra-constitutional means was "neither necessary nor legally permissible."

Based on Charter

The tribunal said it relied only on the Constitution in reaching its decision.

"There can be no constitutional crisis arising from a conflict, no matter how passionate and seemingly irreconcilable it may appear to be, over the determination by independent branches of government of the nature, scope and extent of their respective constitutional powers where the Constitution itself provides for the means and bases for its resolution," the SC said.

"But though it is indeed immensely a blessing for this Court to have found answers in our bedrock of legal principles, it is equally important that it went through this crucible of a democratic process, if only to discover that it can resolve differences without the use of force and aggression upon each other," it added.

Constitutional material

The SC said the issue at bar was "of genuine constitutional material," which only "this Court can properly and competently address and adjudicate in accordance with the clear-cut allocation of powers under our system of government."

The court ruled that Section 16 and 17 of Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure in impeachment proceedings, approved by the House on Nov. 28, 2001, was unconstitutional.

"Consequently, the second impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. which was filed by Reps. Gilbert C. Teodoro Jr. and Felix William B. Fuentebella with the Office of the Secretary General of the House on Oct. 23, 2003 is barred under paragraph 5, Section 3 of Article XI of the Constitution."

'Initiated'

The high court said that the new House rules should be struck down because they "give the term 'initiate' a meaning different from filing and referral.

"These rules cannot contravene the very purpose of the Constitution which said rules were intended to effectively carry out. It is basic that all rules must not contravene the Constitution which is the fundamental law," the court said.

"If as alleged Congress had absolute rule-making power, then it would by necessary implication have the power to alter or amend the meaning of the Constitution without need of referendum."

The tribunal also took pains to say it did not act to protect the Chief Justice.

Not protecting Davide

"It is suggested that by our taking cognizance of the issue of constitutionality of the impeachment proceedings against the Chief Justice, the members of this Court have actually closed ranks to protect [one of its] brethren ... nothing could be farther from the truth," the SC said.

"This Court has dispensed justice over the course of time, unaffected by whomsoever stood to benefit or suffer therefrom, unafraid by whatever imputations or speculations could be made to it, so long as it rendered judgement according to the law and the facts," it said.

"Why can it not now be trusted to wield judicial power in these petitions because it is the highest ranking magistrate who is involved when it it an incontrovertible fact hat the fundamental issue is not him but the validity of a government branch's official act as tested by the limits set by the Constitution?" the court added.

Not above law

The high court said the Chief Justice and the justices were not above the law, but added: "Just because he is the Chief Justice does not imply that he gets to have less in law than anybody else. The law is solicitous of every individual's rights irrespective of his station in life."

The tribunal emphasized that it subjected to judicial review only the main issue of whether the second impeachment complaint violated the constitutionally imposed one-year ban on impeachment cases, and nothing else.

Impeachment included

The Supreme Court did not give credence to De Venecia and Pimentel's argument that the Constitution had specifically excluded impeachment proceedings from judicial review.

Both quoted the Nixon vs United States ruling, where the US Supreme Court, for lack of jurisdiction, had refused to rule on an issue related to the impeachment of US President Richard Nixon.

Dubious

But the high court said the two could not rely on American jurisprudence and Constitution to support their proposition. "Such American jurisprudence and authorities, much less the American Constitution, are of dubious application for these are no longer controlling within our jurisdiction and have only limited persuasive effect insofar as the Philippine constitutional law is concerned," the SC said.

Declaring that "we have cut the umbilical cord," the SC said the paths of the Philippine and US Constitutions "have long since diverged."

Duty of judicial review

The SC pointed out that judicial review in the United States was only implied, while in the Philippines it was expressly provided, and was not just "a power but also a duty."

"And it was given an expanded definition to include the power to correct any grave abuse of discretion on the part of any government branch or instrumentality," the SC said.

Based on the proceedings of the 1986 Constitutional Commission, the tribunal said it was clear that judicial power was not only a power but also a duty, "which cannot be abdicated by the mere specter of this creature called the political doctrine question."

The court upheld the legal standing of the petitioners, saying that because the real "party in interest" (Davide) was unable to vindicate himself because for ethical reasons he could not invoke the jurisdiction of the court, "the court will grant petitioner standing."

As to the "ripeness" of the petitions for adjudication, the tribunal said that it was time to rule on the issues since the second complaint had been already filed and the House had already promulgated the House Rules of Impeachment.

The court also noted that the House could not correct the constitutional infirmities of the second complaint just by withdrawing their signatures from the complaint.

No power

It added: "Neither the House of Representatives nor the Senate is clothed with the power to rule with definitiveness on the issue of constitutionality, whether concerning impeachment proceedings or otherwise ... Remedy cannot be sought from a body which is bereft of the power to grant it."

In a press briefing, court spokesperson Isamel Khan Jr. said impeachment proponents could still appeal the decision, which becomes final in 15 days. *AFP, Reuters, AP*

Is Tatad color blind?

From page A1

1081 on nationwide television will tell you it's the Supreme Court's decision declaring unconstitutional the impeachment complaint signed by 80 or so lawmakers against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"This is the darkest moment in the legal history of the country," Tatad said yesterday after the high court issued its ruling on the impeachment complaint against Davide.

"The Supreme Court decision has effectively destroyed the present legal system," Tatad said as he assailed the tribunal for "acting as judge in its own case."

He called for the resignation of all the Supreme Court justices as well as President Macapagal-Arroyo whom he also blamed for the current crisis and "the citizenry's deepening sense of hopelessness."

For her part, former Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago urged Congress to disregard the Supreme Court ruling, saying it "is void and has no legal effect."

No jurisdiction

The ruling "does not produce any legal consequences," said Santiago, a former Quezon City judge. "That is why the Senate and the House of Representatives should separately declare it inoperative."

According to her, the tribunal "has contradicted itself, particularly its own ruling on grounds of respect for the basic separation of powers."

"The courts may not intervene in the internal affairs of the legislature and it is not within the province of the court to direct Congress how to do its work," Santiago said.

"In constitutional law, the courts will not assume jurisdiction in any case which will amount to an interference by the judicial department with the legislature," she added.

Santiago insisted the Supreme Court had no jurisdiction over the impeachment case which, according to her, was "not one within the court's original jurisdiction designed by the Constitution."

Loi's position

At the Senate, the wife of deposed President Joseph Estrada urged the chamber to make a stand on the Supreme Court ruling.

"We are now confronted with a greater evil—the complete usurpation by the Davide Court of the exclusive jurisdiction and constitutional prerogatives of Congress," Sen. Luisa "Loi" Estrada said in a privilege speech.

"Are we going to stand here in defense of our people's mandate, or shall we now pack up and go home?" Senator Estrada said.

In her speech titled "A Tale of Two Impeachments," Senator Estrada bemoaned the fact that her husband lost the presidency in 2001 where he submitted himself to an impeachment trial at the Senate.

Divided Senate

Senators earlier agreed to hold a caucus as soon as the House of Representatives transmits the Articles of Impeachment against Davide. Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. has refused to transmit the impeachment complaint.

The Senate appeared divided on whether to heed the court ruling or proceed with the impeachment trial of Davide.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he would respect the court ruling. "As a member of the legal profession, I put aside my personal views in the greater interest of the nation," he told reporters.

Sen. Ralph Recto said he and three other members of the so-called Wednesday Club was supporting Drilon's position.

But opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara said two suggestions came up during the caucus on how the Senate should act in the event the House defies the high court and sends the Articles of Impeachment.

Balance

Angara said the Senate could include the complaint in its order of business and debate whether it should be archived. Or, he said, the Senate could convene as an impeachment court and debate the matter.

"It's more likely that majority in the Senate will accept the decision of the Supreme Court, but at the same time we also respect our own process as an impeachment court," Angara told reporters.

"So you have there a balance respecting the ruling of the Supreme Court, but at the same time preserving the institutional process."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the Senate should respect the court ruling which he described as "a confirmation of the rule of law in the country because it shows the primacy of the Constitution."

Davide . . .

From page A1

Court is a supervening event which makes the forging of such a covenant less urgent," the tribunal's spokesperson Ismael Khan Jr. said yesterday.

All the efforts of House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., the most avid proponent of the covenant, which defined itself as the "just and proper solution" to the crisis, had come to nothing.

"He's (Davide) elated. Naturally, he's elated because his position has been vindicated," said Khan who only last week said that the Chief Justice was inclined to accept the covenant because it "does not compromise the independence of the judiciary."

Yesterday he explained why Davide finally rejected the covenant.

Deal-making

There were "substantial changes in the draft covenant which would make it impossible for the Chief Justice to accede to without compromising the integrity and independence of the judiciary."

"The revised draft, it seems, smacks of deal-making, which is anathema to the Chief Justice and the Court," Khan said.

Khan, however, did not specify the "substantial changes" that led Davide to change his mind.

Slept like a babe

De Venecia burned the midnight oil Sunday night in a last-ditch effort to forge the covenant.

In contrast, according to an insider's account, Davide "slept like a babe."

De Venecia placed a late night call to Davide at his residence and had to ask a member of the household to wake up the Chief Justice."

Rep. Robert Ace Barbers (Lakas, Surigao del Norte) recounted that De Venecia called up the sleeping Davide between 10 and 11 p.m.

"The Speaker wanted to discuss the covenant with Davide and the Chief Justice told him that he would have to discuss that with the Supreme Court on Monday morning," Barbers said.

Barbers said that Davide supposedly told De Venecia: "We'll still decide tomorrow."

But the following day, the Supreme Court en banc issued its decision declaring the impeachment complaint against Davide unconstitutional.

Useless

"The covenant therefore has been rendered useless and has been overtaken by the decision of the court," Barbers added.

Rep. Prospero Pichay said it was already immaterial whether Davide would sign the covenant which provides for the withdrawal of the signatories to the Davide impeachment.

Another version

Another congressman, who asked not to be identified, had a slightly different version of De Venecia's late Sunday overtures to the Chief Justice.

"Speaker De Venecia wanted to talk to Davide to ask him whether it was possible for the Supreme Court to delay the release of its decision," the lawmaker said.

The congressman recalled that by Sunday night, talk was circulating that the Supreme Court would rule in Davide's favor.

The INQUIRER source did not say what happened to the supposed request of De Venecia for the high court to hold back the promulgation of its decision at a much later hour Monday, if not the next day.

"Speaker De Venecia merely wanted more time to go about seeking endorsements for the covenant," the congressman said.

7-man panel

Before dinner Sunday, De Venecia met at his residence in Makati with the members of the seven-man panel he created to negotiate with pro-impeachment lawmakers regarding the covenant.

These were Representatives Pichay, Barbers, Neptali Gonzales II, Raul Gonzalez, Florencio Abad and Monico Fuentebella.

Covenant terms

President Macapagal had proposed the covenant to end the worsening crisis that had led the Supreme Court to be at loggerheads with Congress.

The covenant would compel the House of Representatives to withdraw the impeachment complaint against Davide and to settle for a continuing investigation of the Judiciary Development Fund by its committee of justice.

It also states that the Commission on Audit has the authority to audit the books of all government agencies, and that it is the agency, not Davide, which the House committee should ask to explain the disbursements of the multibillion-peso JDF.

The agreement recognizes, "with unswerving neutrality" the independence of the legislative and judicial branches "in the exercise of their respective powers and prerogatives."

Mass for Bellosillo

Though it was a big day for him yesterday, Davide remained in his office on the second floor of the SC building while Khan announced the tribunal's decision at around 1:30 p.m.

Davide, however, attended the Mass for Senior Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo, who is retiring on Thursday, before lunchtime.

After the Mass, Davide thanked Bellosillo for his long service to the judiciary but made no mention of his own controversial status.

BELLOSILLO

DOJ post offered to Bellosillo

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENIOR Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo will retire on Thursday when he reaches the high court's mandatory retirement age of 70.

When asked about strong rumors that President Macapagal-Arroyo had offered him the post of justice secretary, Bellosillo said: "We'll cross the bridge when we get there."

Incumbent Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong is expected to leave his post to run for Congress.

Last week, Ms Macapagal announced a Cabinet revamp as some members of her official family are expected to run in the May 2004 elections.

De Venecia says crucial words, earns praise

From page A1

it regarding the Davide impeachment.

The Speaker confessed that he was forced to break the multi-party agreement to transmit the impeachment complaint to the Senate yesterday because he was not sure whose decision the military and the police would obey.

"We are in a situation wherein we either respect or defy the decision of the Supreme Court. It will come to that. But whose decision will the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police follow?" he asked.

"My personal opinion did not matter at that time. But now, this is too big a burden on my shoulder. It's not fair to me," he said.

De Venecia lamented that he was unfairly criticized in the media and was made laughingstock in many newspaper caricatures and in the streets for the complaint which he did not even sign.

He just took the burden with a heavy heart, he told the 188 members of the House present at the resumption of the session.

Father of the House

De Venecia said as the "father of this House," he had to consider the majority opinion of two-thirds of the members who did not sign the complaint and make it acceptable to the one-third who pushed for the complaint no matter how painful this would be.

He said he could not allow the division in the House to take its toll on the people, some of whom were already fighting in the streets as a result of the crisis.

Can't ignore ruling

De Venecia pointed out that ignoring the court ruling would eventually isolate the House, noting that President Macapagal-Arroyo and Senate President Franklin Drilon had expressed their compliance with the decision.

"I know how it feels and it hurts. I know the tragedy. But I should also think of the two-thirds who did not sign the complaint and whatever we do today will have an effect on our people and our country," he said.

De Venecia went on the narrate the events that led to his proposal of solving the crisis diplomatically, including the introduction of the tripartite covenant *(Story on Page A1)* by the President up to the time he received the Supreme Court decision at 3:30 p.m. yesterday.

He said he resorted to diplomatic maneuvers so that neither the House nor the Supreme Court would lose face in the end.

He said that while there were militant members in the House who were pushing for the impeachment of Davide, there were also militant members who did not want Davide to enter into a compromise with the House.

The most practical solution for the House, he said, would have been the covenant because there was no need for signatories to withdraw their signatures from the complaint as it was an amicable settlement.

He said that unlike before when they were only faced with a restraining order from the court, now they were faced with a "sledge hammer" because of the court's decision declaring the complaint unconstitutional.

De Venecia continued: "This is what I feared. And this was what compelled the President to push for the covenant. Now we are faced with a sledge hammer which is the decision of the Supreme Court."

'Lame duck'

An angry Rep. Didagen Dilangalen called the Speaker a lame-duck leader who was responsible for the crisis in the House because of his failures.

Dilangalen then moved to declare the position of Speaker and all seats in the committees vacant but was blocked by Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay.

Dilangalen (Pwersa ng Masa, Maguindanao) manifested a "motion to declare all (House) positions vacant" as he slammed what he described as De Venecia's "failure of leadership" in steering the House through the Davide impeachment controversy.

'Grand scheme'

Dilangalen also accused the House leadership of being "part of a grand scheme to cover up the corruption of the Judiciary Development Fund."

"Why do we subject ourselves to the caprices of the Supreme Court?" an incensed Dilangalen said.

Pichay immediately stood up to defend De Venecia, saying the Speaker's actions had always been guided by the consensus of the House.

Pichay also declared that the (Dilangalen) motion was "not acceptable to the majority."

Principal complainant

A break was called and congressmen went into huddles.

Lawmakers particularly grouped around Rep. Gilbert Teodoro (NPC, Tarlac), principal complainant in the Davide impeachment and leader of the Nationalist People's Coalition.

De Venecia remained at the rostrum, looking exhausted.

When session resumed at 7:47 p.m., Dilangalen said that he was giving his time to another congressman and that he was withdrawing his motion.

Dilangalen, however, said that he was reserving his right to further question De Venecia's actions at a later time.

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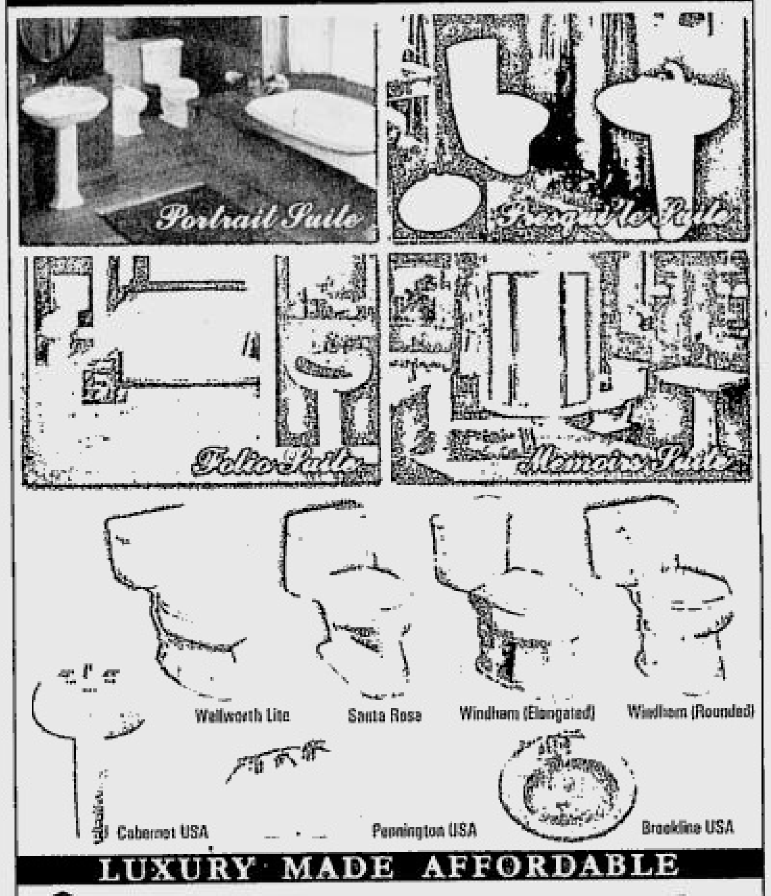

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

More attacks to follow Saudi blast which killed 17, US warns

RIYADH—Rescuers worked into the night to pull bodies from the site of a suicide bombing that killed at least 17 people in Riyadh on Sunday as the United States warned al-Qaida might be planning more such attacks.

Saudi Arabia, which is battling a surge in Islamist violence, vowed to hunt down those linked to the attack and, along with the United States, blamed al-Qaida.

Rescue teams were still searching the wreckage more than 24 hours after the attack on the Muhaya residential compound, which housed mostly Arab expatriate workers.

Bombers posing as police blew up their rigged car in the compound. In addition to the dead, officials said around 120 people were wounded, including 36 children.

"The search and the investigation continues," an Interior Ministry official said in remarks carried on state television, confirming the latest toll.

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who arrived in Riyadh on Sunday, told reporters: "I can't say that last night's attack was the only or the last attack. My view is these al-Qaida terrorists—and I believe it was al-Qaida—would prefer to have many such events."

A Saudi security source in Riyadh said the attack was an "al-Qaida operation."

Supporters of the Saudi-born Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida group have threatened to attack Saudi Arabia's rulers and Westerners in the kingdom. Bin Laden last month vowed to strike American targets inside and outside the United States.

Saudi Arabia has been under pressure to act against al-Qaida since the attacks on US cities on Sept. 11, 2001. Most of the attackers were Saudis and al-Qaida is widely held responsible.

Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Britain, Prince Turki al-Faisal, said in London that attacking a lightly defended target such as the compound was a "clear sign of a desperate group that wants to show it can do things."

"I think it's a measure of their desperation and the fact that they realise they are being hunted severely by the authorities," he said.

"They want to show that they can do something, after all the successes that we've had in tracking these people down over the last six months. There have been many arrests, many discoveries of arms caches, munitions and explosives. So these people are in a desperate state."

A STILL image taken from Saudi TV shows rescue workers walking past destroyed buildings following the explosion in Riyadh Nov. 9. REUTERS

The blast ripped an avenue of destruction through the 200 villas in the compound, just days after Western nations issued fresh terror alerts and Washington shut its missions in the kingdom, the world's biggest oil exporter.

The Saudi ministry official said seven Lebanese, four Egyptians, one Saudi, one Sudanese and four unidentified people had been killed. The dead included five children.

Four Americans of Arab origin and six Canadians were among the injured, whose countries of origin also included African and Asian states.

There were no details of the attackers, except that Saudi sources said there had been at least two.

Western embassies in Saudi urged their nationals to remain vigilant and restrict their movements. *Reuters*

Iran vows to suspend uranium enrichment

TEHRAN—Iran, suspected by Washington of covertly working on an atomic bomb, said on Sunday it would suspend its disputed uranium enrichment program in the coming days, a promise first made last month but yet to be fulfilled.

"Iran will announce and consequently suspend its uranium enrichment in the coming days," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said at a weekly news conference.

Tehran pledged on Saturday to give the UN nuclear watchdog letters next week making official its acceptance of tougher nuclear inspections and a suspension of its uranium enrichment program, but said nothing about the timing of the suspension.

Diplomats in Vienna, where the UN International Atomic Energy Agency is located, have said they were losing patience with Iran for stalling the suspension of uranium enrichment activities, which Washington believes are at the heart of a secret atomic weapons program.

Last year, US President George W. Bush branded Iran part of an "axis of evil" with North Korea and pre-war Iraq. Iran denies it wants an atom bomb and says its nuclear ambitions are peaceful.

On Oct. 21, Iranian officials told the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Britain that Tehran would not only sign the Additional Protocol permitting tougher UN inspections, but would temporarily stop enriching uranium to build confidence.

The IAEA board of governors had requested this suspension twice, first in June and again in a tough Sept. 12 resolution that set an Oct. 31 deadline for Iran to give the IAEA a full declaration of all nuclear activities.

Enrichment is a process of purifying uranium to make it usable as nuclear fuel or in weapons.

Although it was assumed that the suspension would take place immediately, it did not. It turned out there was disagreement on what the suspension should entail. *Reuters*

Koizumi 'slips into difficulty' after polls

KOIZUMI

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi faces a rocky ride within his own party after the strong showing by the main opposition in the weekend's general elections, but analysts warn a true two-party system is still a long way off.

Disappointment over the prime minister's apparent failure to fulfill promise of structural reform, the rise of a coalition partner, loss of a scandal-hit ally and involvement in Iraq have all cost Koizumi dear, observers say.

Initial results showed the coalition led by Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had won 275 of 480 parliamentary lower house seats after Sunday's vote. The LDP alone won 237 seats, down from 247 held before the poll.

Three successful candidates who ran as independents joined the LDP on Monday, increasing its tally to 240, while the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won 177 seats, up from 137 before the election.

Full official results were due later Monday.

"Mr. Koizumi had loudly pitched for 'structural reforms' but voters have not seen any major change," except for some improving signs in the economy, said Takashi Inoguchi, politics professor at Tokyo University.

His economic programs are likely to be unchanged, but Inoguchi said: "Dark clouds are hanging over the LDP and Mr Koizumi... If things carry on like this, the DPJ will make another leap in upper-house elections next year."

Kaoru Okano, politics professor at Meiji University, said "the Koizumi government has slipped into difficulty."

A longtime friend of Koizumi, Taku Yamasaki, who served as Koizumi's link with party old guard, lost the seat he had held for 30 years after sex scandals destroyed his party influence, Okano said.

Meanwhile, the New Komei Party, backed by the nation's largest lay Buddhist group, Soka Gakkai, now has the casting vote in Koizumi's coalition, he said. *AFP*

Bremer: Guerrillas will step up attacks

BAGHDAD—Iraq's US governor Paul Bremer warned on Monday guerrillas would step up attacks to stop reconstruction efforts and said several hundred foreign militants had entered the country.

Bremer vowed in an interview with Britain's Times newspaper US-led forces would not be driven out of Iraq by the militants because the price of failure was too high for the country itself and the Middle East.

"We're going to have increased attacks and increased terrorism because the terrorist can see the reconstruction dynamic is moving in our direction," said Bremer, adding the foreign fighters were from Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

"It will be more of a problem in the months ahead unless the intelligence gets better," he said.

Washington, which has lost 150 soldiers to hostile fire since President George W. Bush declared major combat over on May 1, blames the attacks on Saddam Hussein supporters and foreign fighters, including al-Qaida members.

"Consequences of us not succeeding here would be very grave. They are for the Iraqis fatal, perhaps for the Middle East almost as fatal," Bremer told the Times.

He was quoted as saying an Iraqi "special force" to counter rising militancy would probably not include former members of Saddam's intelligence services, but it was "not impossible."

Sympathizing with the Iraqi people, he said it was "not comfortable being occupied," but added: "And it's not comfortable being an occupying power."

Iraq is high on the campaign agenda as Bush seeks reelection next year. The latest major opinion poll, released by the Washington Post and ABC News on Nov. 2, showed his approval rating was at 56 percent— down from topping 90 percent after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Several loud explosions echoed across Baghdad on Sunday night and police said a mortar bomb hit a house in the city center, but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

It appeared to be the fourth mortar attack by guerrillas in a week on the capital.

Guerrillas have grown increasingly bold in launching mortar attacks on the US-led administration on the west side of the Tigris River. No one has been killed, but several personnel in the US-led coalition have been wounded.

US warplanes bombed targets in Iraq on Sunday in air strikes that resumed last week for the first time in more than six months after the recent shooting down of three US helicopters.

In the latest air strikes, F-16 fighter-bombers dropped three 500-pound bombs near the flashpoint town of Falluja, in an area west of Baghdad where 16 US soldiers were killed when a US Chinook helicopter was downed.

The air strikes followed attacks on US troops, a US military source said. He had no precise details.

US troops in Saddam's home town of Tikrit have launched a new operation in the hostile area to hunt down guerrillas. "If necessary, we'll carry out more shows of force," said Maj. Josslyn Aberle, spokesperson for the 4th Infantry Division.

Saddam remains at large after being toppled from power by US-led forces in April.

Iraq's interim Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council would meet a Dec. 15 deadline for setting out a path toward self-rule. *Reuters*

Taiwan may not buy 'overpriced' US submarines

TAIPEI—Taiwan may back out of its plan to buy eight submarines from the United States claiming they have been overpriced, the China Times reported Monday.

Washington had estimated the eight conventional submarines for Taiwan's navy could cost up to $11 billion, more than double the market price, a defense official told the paper.

If the differences over the cost could not be resolved, Taiwan's navy might switch to buying used submarines instead, the official said.

In reply to a query raised at the parliament, defense minister Tang Yao-ming reiterated the official line that procuring the eight submarines was a "deterrent" which Taiwan badly needed.

But Tang also sought to ease the price concerns.

"The defense ministry would by no means pay exorbitant prices. All the weapons to be purchased must not exceed international prices while they are required to meet our demands," he said.

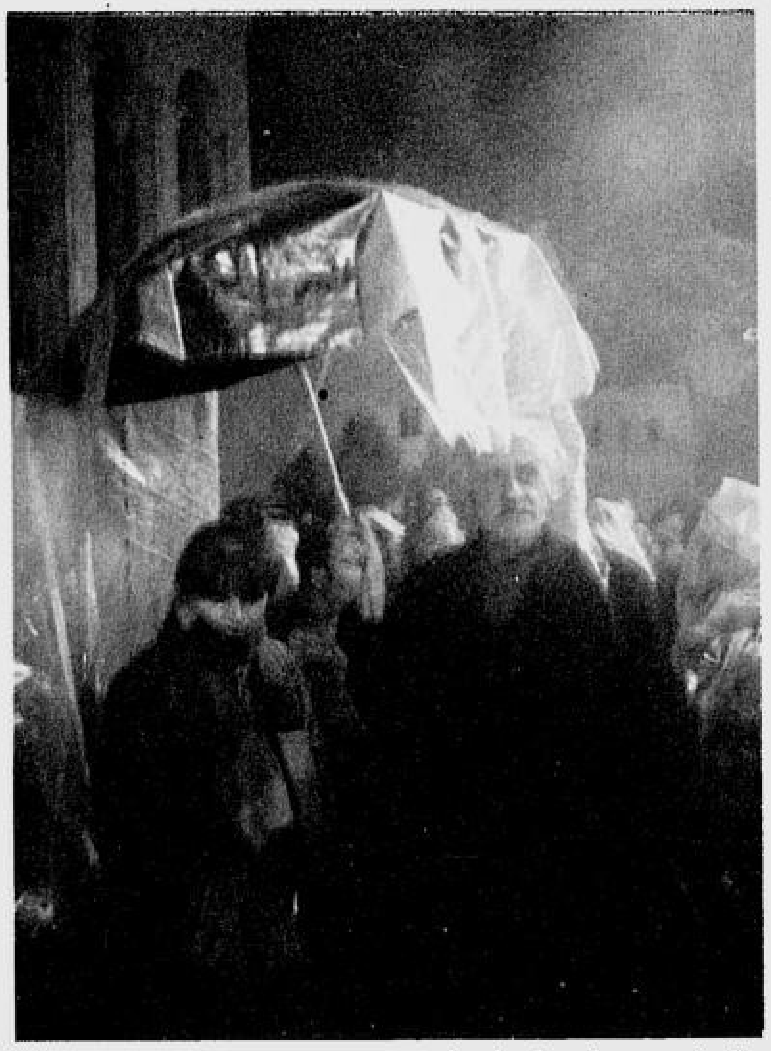
US President George W. Bush approved the submarine sale in April 2001 as part of the most comprehensive arms sales to the island since 1992.

The deal, however, has progressed slowly as the United States has not built conventional submarines for more than 40 years.

An opposition parliamentarian said South Korea built three German-designed submarines for $367 million each, India built three at $323 million per submarine and Pakistan constructed three at $317 million each.

"The prices quoted by the United States are outrageously high," the defense official said.

However, Taiwan would have to pay 20 percent more than the US tender if it insisted on building some of the submarines on its own, he added. *AFP*



GEORGIAN opposition supporters stand and wait under an umbrella during a rally in central Tbilisi late Nov. 9. Embattled Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze failed on Sunday to put an end to post-election turmoil in his Caucasus state after talks with opposition leaders broke down. REUTERS

Crisis in Georgia deepens as opposition stands firm

TBILISI—The political crisis in Georgia deepened Monday as opposition leaders refused to back down from their demands that President Eduard Shevardnadze resign and thousands of protesters gathered again on the streets of the capital.

Amid the turmoil, Shevardnadze late Sunday spoke by telephone to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin who assured him that Moscow was "ready to give all possible support to Georgia," a presidential spokesperson in Tbilisi said.

Putin, who telephoned the Georgian leader, said in the conversation that "as always, you will find a solution and restore stability to the country," the spokesperson Kakha Inmadze said.

Georgia has long accused its former Soviet master of interference but Shevardnadze also met the Russian ambassador who said that Moscow was particularly concerned that the situation could get "out of control."

Outside the parliament building, some 2,000 to 3,000 opposition supporters were already massed there by mid-morning. The protesters say they will not budge until the president annuls a disputed parliamentary election and quits office.

The protests, which have been going on throughout this former Soviet republic for over a week, have been peaceful. But there were fears that with Georgia's turbulent history, they could turn violent. Late-night peace talks broke up with no agreement Sunday.

"We will fight to the end, until this regime leaves," said Mikhail Saakashvili, who was at the failed talks. "Shevardnadze is leading the country toward civil war. He is responsible for whatever happens."

Nino Utiashvili, a student who joined the protests Monday, said she could not stand by idly at such a time of crisis.

"There is a terrible situation in Tbilisi and I cannot stay at home and watch these events calmly on television. In Georgia there are no laws, there is no fairness, there is nothing," she said.

Defense Minister David Tevzadze warned on Sunday that "the situation has practically gone out of control. The situation is no longer manageable."

But Tevzadze would not be drawn on whether the army would intervene. "It is not clear how events will develop... There is always a choice of mechanisms, and time will show what will be done," he said. *AFP*

Guatemalans vote to dump ex-dictator

GUATEMALA CITY—Guatemala's former dictator Efrain Rios Montt has lost his bid for the presidency in an election Sunday that was marked by high turnout and a lack of feared political violence, exit polls suggested.

As Guatemalans awaited official results Monday, El Periodico daily published an exit poll placing opposition candidates Oscar Berger and Alvaro Colom in first and second place with 42 percent and 27 percent of the vote respectively.

Rios Montt came in third with 15 percent of the vote in the impoverished Latin American country, excluding him from a Dec. 28 runoff race.

The exit poll surveyed 1,273 voters at 68 polling stations, and had a 3.8 percent margin of error.

Guatemala breathed a sigh of relief that feared political violence did not materialize Sunday.

"It's very positive that voter turnout was so high on this election day and all the fears were unfounded," said Tom Koenigs, head of the UN Verification Mission in Guatemala.

"Up to now, in general terms, the day was peaceful... there were problems here and there, but Guatemalans were patient," he said.

He described Sunday's vote as "the most watched elections in the history of the country," with more than 5,000 observers on hand led by contingents from the Organization of American States and the European Union.

In the capital, people lined up outside polling stations before dawn, waiting for the doors to open. There was a heavy turnout of the country's five million voters throughout the day, and by the time the polls closed, officials said those still in line would be allowed to vote.

Rural areas also reported a heavy turnout, with a strong contingent of indigenous voters at the ballot box. About half of Guatemala's registered voters are indigenous. *AFP*

HARBOR VIEW
Tourists get a spectacular view of Sydney Harbor including Fort Denison (below) as they climb the eastern arch of the Sydney Harbor Bridge at dawn on Nov. 10. REUTERS

Charles to hold crisis talks over 'sex scandal'

LONDON—Britain's Prince Charles was set to hold crisis talks on Monday to confront a media frenzy over allegations of a sexual incident involving the heir to the throne and a royal servant.

A Scottish newspaper on Sunday printed details of the allegations against Charles, but despite their lurid headlines, most of Britain's press has been restrained from printing more because of legal restraints.

Charles, Queen Elizabeth II's eldest son, is due to hold talks with his son Prince William, companion Camilla Parker Bowles and other royal aides on Monday following his return from a 10-day tour of India and the Gulf, The Times newspaper reported.

The latest media frenzy to shake the monarchy has only intensified since Charles' London residence issued an unprecedented statement categorically denying allegations of an incident whose nature was not revealed.

Details of the affair were published in a Glasgow newspaper, which is not subject to the same legal restrictions as newspapers in England and Wales, and several other countries.

"We were aware when we issued the statement denying these ludicrous allegations that there was a possibility that the story would be published in Scotland," The Times quoted a spokesperson for Charles' London residence Clarence House as saying.

Some details emerged in the mass-circulation Mail on Sunday which quoted a former royal servant, George Smith, as saying he had witnessed an incident involving Charles and another royal aide.

In another twist to the saga, it was also reported Sunday that a senior aide to Charles once questioned his sexuality.

The claims came after a week which began with former royal aide Michael Fawcett taking out an injunction against the Mail on Sunday, gagging it from publishing a story based on claims by Smith, the former royal servant.

Smith was quoted by the Mail on Sunday last November as saying he told the late Princess Diana, Charles' ex-wife, in 1996 that he was raped several years earlier by one of Charles' aides.

On Thursday, with rumors continuing to fly, Peat went on television to admit that the prince was at the center of the allegations, but categorically denied that any "incident" happened.

PRINCE CHARLES

The News of the World said Charles was planning to take part in "a full-scale" television interview to defend his reputation if full details of the allegations were published.

Britain's newspapers heaped scorn on the royals' handling of the saga. Some of the more unforgiving tabloids have previously claimed that the allegation is powerful enough to bring down the monarchy should it be disclosed.

The furor comes as the monarchy is still reeling from the publication of memoirs by the former royal servant Paul Burrell, onetime butler and confidant to Princess Diana. *AFP*

Sri Lanka leader sought more power, but may emerge weaker

By Tim Sullivan

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—It began with an attempt by the president to reinforce her power: Parliament was suspended, three powerful Cabinet ministers fired, a state of emergency declared. Small squads of soldiers were deployed to key positions in the capital.

But nearly a week after Sri Lanka was plunged into political crisis and its ever-fragile peace process made even more precarious, President Chandrika Kumaratunga appears to be weaker than ever.

Her political rival, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, was welcomed back from an overseas trip by thousands of ecstatic supporters, members of Parliament refused to defect to her cause and the Tamil Tiger rebels—a distant but powerful player in the country's politics—made clear her moves were unacceptable.

The president had hoped to gain a few more seats in Parliament during the crisis, and was aggressively courting some of the prime minister's supporters to switch sides, observers say. But Wickremesinghe's two-seat majority stood firm.

If she wanted to look presidential, she ended up looking reckless.

Even the Tigers, a ruthless rebel army known for kidnapping children to use as soldiers and dispatching women fighters on suicide bombing missions, sometimes looked measured in comparison.

"Like smashing the pot when the milk in it is churning into butter, the Sri Lankan president has sabotaged the peace process at a crucial time," V. Karuna, a top Tiger military commander, said last week.

Still, Kumaratunga ended up proving a couple of things. For one, the crisis made it clear she has the support of the military, which followed her orders as the turmoil erupted.

She's also shown she's a politician who cannot be ignored.

Kumaratunga, who lost an eye to a Tiger suicide bomber in a 1999 assassination attempt, has a virulent distrust of the rebels and regularly criticizes Wickremesinghe, who leads the peace talks, saying he gives in too easily to their demands.

But since the talks began in early 2002, following a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire, she has been increasingly marginalized.

The constitution gives the president more power than the prime minister, including control of the military and the ability to dissolve Parliament. But Wickremesinghe has emerged as the country's dominant politician over the past 18 months, his power buttressed by a slim parliamentary majority, the support of the country's business community and his leadership in the peace process. *AP*

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The Court has spoken

EDITORIAL

THE SUPREME Court has finally ruled on the major issues involved in the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., ending two weeks of a bitter dialectical struggle and political uncertainty. The voice of reason and sanity has prevailed, and we can now look forward to the return of political normalcy and stability, unless the anti-Davide forces are plotting some destabilizing moves.

It took moral courage for the members of the high court to act on the impeachment case. First of all, no less than its presiding officer, the Chief Justice, was going to be affected by its decision. The court could have taken the easy way out and refused to touch the case because it could be accused of protecting one of its own.

But Associate Justice Conchita Morales, who penned the decision, denied that the members of the court, by taking cognizance of the impeachment case, actually closed ranks to protect one of its brethren. She said: "That the members' interest in ruling on said issue is as much at stake as is that of the Chief Justice. Nothing could be farther from the truth."

Justice Morales said that "the fundamental issue is not [the Chief Justice] but the validity of a government branch's official act as tested by the limits set by the Constitution[.]" To disqualify the entire court from the suit at bar, she said, is to regard it as "likely incapable of impartiality when one of its members is a party to a case, which is simply a *non sequitur*."

The Chief Justice is not above the law and neither is any other member of the court, she stressed. But she added that "just because he is the Chief Justice does not imply that he gets to have less in law than anybody else."

During the discussion of the case some government officials and legal luminaries urged the Supreme Court to exercise judicial restraint. But Justice Morales said that the exercise of judicial restraint over justiciable issues was not an option before the court. "Adjudication may not be declined, because this Court is not legally disqualified," she said. "Otherwise, this Court would be shirking its duty vested under Art. VIII, Sec. 1 (2) of the Constitution."

Indeed, we think that it would have been an act of moral cowardice for the Supreme Court to have declined to decide the case in the exercise of "judicial restraint." For it to have renounced jurisdiction over the case would have heightened the climate of uncertainty, extended the agony of the nation and prolonged the state of political and economic paralysis. The case was crying out for resolution, and resolve it the high court did.

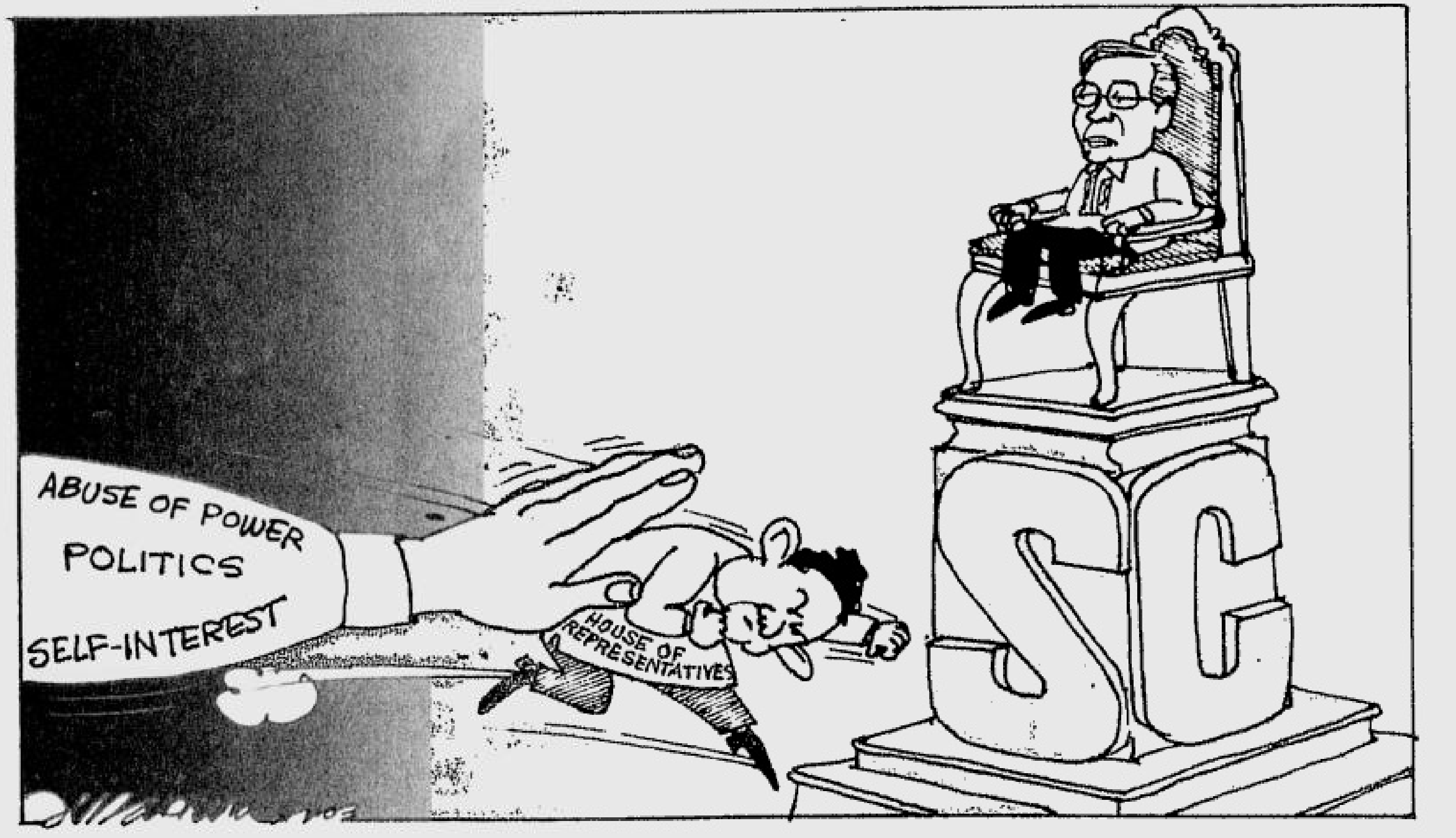
Another argument advanced for judicial restraint was the possibility of a constitutional crisis if the court did not exercise judicial restraint.

"Such an argument, however, is specious, to say the least," Justice Morales said. She added that as correctly stated by Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, the possibility of the occurrence of a constitutional crisis "is not a reason for this Court to refrain from upholding the Constitution in all impeachment cases. Justices cannot abandon their constitutional duties just because their action may start, if not precipitate, a crisis."

The argument, Justice Morales said, also presumes that the coordinate branches of government "would behave in a lawless manner and not do their duty under the law to uphold the Constitution and obey the laws of the land." But there is no reason to believe, she added, that any of the branches of government would behave "in a precipitate manner and risk social upheaval, violence, chaos and anarchy by encouraging disrespect for [the Constitution]."

The Supreme Court has spoken; we hope that all parties in the case will abide by its decision. But as of yesterday, it seemed that some members of the anti-Davide forces would still wage a last-ditch battle. Early yesterday afternoon some congressmen were reported to be planning to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate despite the Supreme Court's ruling. Former Sen. Miriam Santiago urged the House to disregard the Supreme Court decision, saying that the court had no jurisdiction over the impeachment complaint.

For those who would defy the court's decision, we quote its doctrine in People v. Veneracion (which it cited in the present case): "Obedience to the rule of law forms the bedrock of our system of justice. If [public officers—*substituted for judges in the original*], under the guise of religious or political beliefs, were allowed to roam unrestricted beyond boundaries within which they are required by law to exercise the duties of their office, then law becomes meaningless."



Two cases of injustice in the courts

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHY are Filipinos so drastically divided on the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide? People who don't really understand the legal issues have very strong feelings for and against the impeachment. Why?

I think one reason is that those who are anti-impeachment don't trust the congressmen. Let's face it, the trust rating of politicians is very low. That is the result of decades of saying something and then doing the opposite.

On the other hand, those who are pro-impeachment believe that graft and corruption is already too much. Also the courts have less public sympathy because of the slow wheels of justice. Almost everybody has heard of cases languishing in the courts. They have also heard and read of victims of injustice, some committed by the courts themselves.

In my work as a journalist, many people who think they are victims of injustice come to me to ask for help. It is ironic that people would rather go to the press than to the government to seek help. But what can we do except publicize their predicament? Some of their stories can really break your heart and make you wonder if justice is really blindfolded. One case which I have already written about a few times before, was decided by the Supreme Court itself and it is very strange. It concerns a man who had already won, twice, his case in the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court (possession of a cockpit). The decisions have already become final and executory. But instead of enforcing it, the Supreme Court, after five years, made a complete turnabout and said its decision could no longer be enforced because of "a supervening event."

Instead of enjoying the fruits of his two victories, the winner, Damaso Flores, was deprived of his home which was not even involved in the litigation and is exempt from execution. The sheriff seized and sold it and gave the proceeds to the loser. To add to his dismay, Flores was cited for contempt and fined P5,000, or imprisonment of five days.

What was the "supervening event" that turned Flores' twin victories into a disaster? The loser had purchased, on April 18, 1986, the cockpit. But the two decisions on the case had become final and executory on March 25, 1988 and Nov. 15, 1989. A "supervening event" comes after, not before, the event it "supervenes. Obviously, the Court erred.

Since July 29, 1996, Flores has been trying to have this error corrected. A decision of the Supreme Court can be reexamined anytime and amended or reversed whenever warranted, for rectifying error is better than persisting in it. Flores has filed 29 pleadings seeking reconsideration of the erroneous decision in the interest of justice. However, these were merely "noted without action" or "expunged" from the records of the cases.

On Aug. 25, 2003, Flores sent an "urgent letter-appeal" to all the members of the First Division headed by Chief Justice Hilario Davide telling them of the injustice done to him. On Aug. 26, Davide directed the clerk of court to include it in the First Division's agenda for Sept. 8, 2003. We don't know what has happened since then.

* * *

Another heart-breaking case is that of a labor arbiter of the National Labor Relations Commission who was convicted by the Sandiganbayan of graft and sentenced to imprisonment of 8 to 10 years, perpetual disqualification from office and ordered to pay an employer a total of P79,800 in civil liability. Why, what did he do? He performed his ministerial duty of enforcing an inherited decision penned by another labor arbiter whom he had succeeded. If he had not ordered its enforcement, he would have been charged with dereliction of duty. But for doing his duty, he was sentenced to a long prison term by the court and pay almost P80,000 in damages.

What was the decision that he had ordered enforced? That a waiter who had been illegally dismissed by his hotel employer be reinstated and paid back wages. This decision has been affirmed by the National Labor Relations Commission and the Supreme Court.

But here is the strange part: the employer admitted in open court that he never complied with the order to reinstate the dismissed waiter and pay his back wages. Yet he was able to have a public servant doing his duty convicted and sentenced to a long prison term. Where is justice here?

It is clear that the accused labor arbiter did not cause any injury to the complaining employer because the final writ of execution ordered implemented was aborted. The employer neither reinstated the employee nor paid his back wages. He therefore did not come to court with clean hands. On the contrary, it was the employer who caused damage to his dismissed employee and to the government through the accused public servant who is tasked to protect the rights of workers.

Yet it was the public servant doing his duty who was ordered by the court to pay the P68,000 attorney's fees paid by the employer and the P11,800 for the supersede as bond filed by the employer.

The Sandigan said the arbiter issued the writ of execution with "undue haste." But the complaint for illegal dismissal was filed way back in 1978, decided by the previous arbiter on July 10, 1981, affirmed by the Supreme Court on March 15, 1985, and it was seven years later that the accused arbiter ordered the issuance of a writ of execution. Where is the "undue haste" there? Where is justice here?

Tragedy

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LET'S be fair.

Josefina Lichauco would say later that Panfilo Villaruel was a decent man. He had merely become disgusted with the way things have gotten in this country, particularly corruption in government. Villaruel's own wife and children would vouch for the fact that he was not naturally given to violence, he merely despaired of things getting better. Though he probably deserved a jail term, he did not deserve to die.

Arnold Clavio, who was interviewing Villaruel during the takeover, quoted him as saying he was not doing another Oakwood, he had no mutineers to back him up, he and his companion, Ricardo Catchillar, were doing this on their own to air their grievances. Clavio would also say Villaruel was ready to surrender and was in fact shouting so when he was gunned down by the SWAT team.

But all this presumes you have time to think clearly in situations like that. All this presumes you have prescience to see things beforehand with the luxury of hindsight. That is a horrendous presumption to make with the PNP. That is certainly a horrendous presumption to make in these times of darkness and despair.

Villaruel seized an airport tower at a time when Malacañang, the AFP and the PNP were paranoid about a coup. He did so at an hour when the just were sleeping the sleep of the just and the unjust were tossing and turning in bed trying to plot ways to cling to power. The timing of the move could not have indicated anything other than insidious intent. Villaruel himself would say all he wanted was a forum for people to sit up and listen. Seizing an airport tower is the least guaranteed to achieve it. Certainly, it is not what people will hear.

I myself thought another mutiny was in the offing when I first heard of the takeover in the wee hours of Friday, while enjoying the company of friends. The people who texted me furiously obviously thought so too. The Oakwood mutiny having been only a few months away, and with coup rumors abounding, that is the first thing you would think. That is certainly the first thing the current occupant of Malacañang, who has become *praning* from receiving one eviction notice after another of late, I would think. You can always try to dispel that idea, as Villaruel did, but if you just occupied a vital installation armed with explosives, and made noises about blowing it up, your credibility is not going to be the highest in the world.

Villaruel's kin and friends would say later he was a good man, but a good man armed with grenades and explosives can still blow things to kingdom come. More to the point, a peaceful man does not seize an airport tower armed with explosives even in dire straits: A person is what he does. And still more to the point, someone takes over an airport tower, your first instinct will not be to look into his character references, it will only be to think of the lives he puts in peril, particularly belonging to those hovering in the air. The notion that those lives were never in danger because the intruder was a peaceable man is a judgment that can only be made ex post facto. Hindsight will always be 20-20 vision. Not so foresight. Particularly unfortunately for Villaruel, this country's authorities are not fond of watching serious movies like Costa-Gavras' "Mad City," a hostage drama aired recently on cable TV. They like watching only action movies. Villaruel himself might have thought he was living out "The Negotiator," where Samuel Jackson proves his point by taking a terrorist route. But his raiders might also have thought they were living out "Die Hard, Part II," where Bruce Willis takes out a terrorist who has seized a control tower and has been crashing planes. Life imitates blockbuster, with tragic ending.

My sympathy for military officers, ex- or current, who have legitimate grievances, ends where their taking violent action begins. A case could be made that the raiding team did not have to shoot down someone who was begging to surrender. But another case could be made that the raiding team, fearing he or Catchillar could push a button and blow them all to hell, thought of their own lives first.

It is tragic and a loss of life could have been avoided. But for that you cannot blame the raiding team, or at least blame them alone for impetuousness, or murderousness. You have to blame Villaruel and Catchillar first and last. They brought this upon themselves. You try to sell pork before a mosque and you cannot always say you deserve only to be beaten up and not skewered by a kris for the trespass.

Seizing an airport tower is not the same thing as seizing a radio station and shouting your head off to anyone who would listen. Or occupying a building in Makati, as the Oakwood mutineers did. You have the luxury of time there. You seize an airport tower and you put other people's lives at risk, which is murderousness. No amount of being good natured or aggrieved may diminish your criminal irresponsibility. You get away with something like that, and every Tom, Dick and Harry—or every sergeant, captain and major—will think nothing of seizing this and that, armed only with grievance, noble intention and a backpack full of TNT.

The real tragedy here is not just that Villaruel and Catchillar died in a blaze of gunfire, or in the cold of a summary execution, however you choose to call it. It is that their message died along with them, the way the Oakwood mutineers' message did with their mutiny. Loudness does not always attract attention, it often only induces numbness. Villaruel himself justified the path he took by saying: "All we do is debate, all we do is argue. Like you, I've been airing complaints against the government. But did anyone listen?"

Well, by taking this stupid route, will anyone do?

‘Clear-cut victory’

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SUPREME Court ruled overwhelmingly on the unconstitutionality of the impeachment motion against Chief Justice Hilario Davide, a clear victory for the huge anti-impeachment segment among the populace. The ruling on the jurisdiction issue drew a unanimous vote among the 14 justices, while on the issue of the constitutionality of the impeachment complaint, it was near-unanimous, with Justice Reynato Puno saying he “does not need to answer that issue”—in effect, a dissent. On a third issue, whether to promulgate the decision now or wait until it gets to the Senate, three justices dissented, namely, Josue Bellosillo (who retires tomorrow, photo-finish), Puno and Consuelo Ynares-Santiago. The efforts put by the court into the multiple decisions showed in its 300-page ruling, whose main opinion, embodying those three issues above, and penned by Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, involved around 100 pages. Eight justices rendered separate opinions.

* * *

Former Senate President Jovito Salonga, who worked very hard to mobilize public opinion for Davide and against impeachment, and offered his own enlightening opinions to the court as *amicus curiae*, considers the voting a “clear-cut victory” on the twin issues of jurisdiction and constitutionality, and I agree. The overwhelming vote against impeachment showed little room for indecision, and was a most popular one, judging from the reams of copy on it and the opinions of innumerable legal minds, including the majority of the seven or eight *amici curiae* who were invited to render their opinion on this subject. But more than popular, it was the right decision to make. The Constitution had to be upheld.

* * *

The two major branches involved in this issue worked all through the day yesterday. The high court made up its mind the night before, but the announcement was deferred until early afternoon; one could sense the court was still waiting up to the last minute for what Jovito Salonga and Raul Pangalangan had called the exploration of “constitutional avenues ” before promulgating its ruling. The court was obviously monitoring the efforts of the House of Representatives to hammer out up to the last minute a “covenant” acceptable to both branches. As the high court justices met yesterday, Speaker Jose de Venecia convened a House caucus at the Edsa Shangrila Hotel attended by some 130 members from various parties, including a sprinkling from the Nationalist People’s Coalition that had spearheaded the impeachment move. Last-ditch efforts were launched by the Speaker’s allies to refine the covenant principles for a mutually acceptable formula, but in the end the high court could not relent on the fiscal autonomy issue. It was no go for the covenant.

* * *

With the ruling finally promulgated, the next step for the House was to decide how to handle the ruling. What was spectacular was that there was obviously no doubt in the minds of the House members present in the caucus, led by JDV, that now the court’s ruling has to be upheld. With the same signal from Senate President Franklin Drilon, who over the weekend had stressed that his chamber would not accept the impeachment resolution if it’s transmitted from the House despite the court ruling, there was no doubt in anyone’s mind in that caucus on what to do: the ruling has to be upheld and respected.

* * *

But as this column was being written, it remained uncertain how the NPC-led pro-impeachment bloc would react in the face of the ruling. There were rumors that the NPC would persist in sending the complaint to the Senate, although that seemed like a clear exercise in futility, given Drilon’s stand which doubtless is supported by majority of the senators. Moreover, that move is certain to be blocked by the De Venecia-led majority, as the Speaker said he would let every member speak his mind on the matter. Then too, many lawmakers had already indicated their intention to withdraw their signatures from the complaint.

Let’s hope that the NPC would not be obstinate for the sake of being obstinate, as this would isolate them and make them look like rebels without a cause. NPC chair and founder Eduardo Cojuangco should moderate his group and knock some sense into their heads, in order to reduce the tremendous collateral damage that has affected first and foremost himself.

Speaker De Venecia, in upholding the rule of law, may be laying his post on the line—the NPC might conceivably try to oust him, and shatter the Sunshine Coalition. But I think the majority of the lawmakers would uphold him. JDV shouldn’t worry, for if he should fall, he’d land right into the lap of the people for upholding the supremacy of the Constitution.

* * *

They say it’s lovelier the second time around. On Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7 p.m. a benefit concert titled, “Salute 2: Once Again,” will be staged at the Manila Hotel by the same group, led by producer Beth Sison-Tagle, which staged the very successful “Salute 1” for the benefit of the policemen and their families. But this time, the second concert on Wednesday will be for the benefit of the widows and orphans of soldiers of the Armed Forces. “Salute 2” will feature an expanded cast, for joining the original “three tenors,” namely, Secretaries Joey Lina and Angelo Reyes and MMDA Director General Bayani Fernando, will be Finance Secretary Lito Camacho, Housing czar Mike Defensor, Justice Undersecretary Mercy Gutierrez, and the House’s “Spice Boys,” namely, Reps. Ace Barbers, Ricky Sandoval, Nonoy Andaya and Migs Zubiri. The cast will be enhanced by professionals Ivy Violan and Dulce, as well as some spouses of Cabinet members; President Macapagal has accepted the invitation to grace the show, and perhaps may be persuaded to do a number too, all for the benefit of the soldiers’ widows and orphans.

The artful tactician in China’s Hu

NEWS ANALYSIS

Benjamin Kang Lim

BEIJING—Chinese Communist Party chief Hu Jintao spent a decade preparing for high office with a career that marked him as cautious, colorless and, perhaps, capable.

After a year in power, Hu has surprised many critics, weathering two major crises with a combination of decisiveness and determination while shadow-boxing to erode the power of his still influential predecessor, Jiang Zemin.

All the while, he has carefully avoided a political showdown.

“As Hu has not yet fully consolidated power, he does not want to trigger a direct and serious confrontation with Jiang,” said Kou Chien-wen, a China expert at Taiwan’s Institute of International Relations who is working on a biography of Hu.

Hu has chiseled away at party traditions and Jiang’s policies, cultivated allies among the other top leaders and left no opening for his chief rival—the Jiang ally, Vice President Zeng Qinghong.

Hu, named party chief on Nov. 15, 2002 at a congress that saw the first smooth transition of power in Communist Chinese history, now aims to survive through the 17th congress in 2007.

“If Hu is reelected, Zeng will no longer be a real threat,” Kou said.

Hu, 60, also took over as state president in March this year, but Jiang remains chief of the Central Military Commission, which commands the 2.5 million-strong People’s Liberation Army.

In a sign of Jiang’s residual influence after a 13-year reign, his protégé Zeng has taken on a military portfolio and become point man on Hong Kong.

But the balance of power in the party’s all-powerful nine-seat Politburo Standing Committee—a Jiang stronghold at the time of the leadership succession—has quietly shifted.

Standing Committee members on Hu’s side or in neutral territory are now in the majority, eroding Jiang’s grip on the body, sources said.

Analysts said Hu had emerged stronger from two major crises—an outbreak of the deadly flu-like SARS virus and Hong Kong’s biggest street protest since 1989—and had largely succeeded in spinning himself the image of a man of the people.

“Hu enjoys the support of the people. It’ll be difficult for Jiang to dethrone him unless he fumbles big time,” said a Chinese political scientist who spoke on condition of anonymity.

All of this has taken place without threatening the maxim of Communist China—that the power of the party, which has monopolized politics since 1949, must be preserved.

“There are two preconditions for reform—the Communist Party’s position as ruling party, and socialism should not change,” said Wang Yukai, a professor at the National School of Administration.

Hu has moved to make the party’s elite, 24-member Politburo more transparent and flirted with political, media and judicial reforms to help curb corruption and make officials more accountable, but has played within the party boundaries.

His dramatic decision to report openly on the SARS epidemic, followed by China’s unprecedented disclosure of a submarine accident, spawned brief hopes of prolonged transparency and more radical reforms.

But authorities continue to jail cyber-dissidents and pro-democracy activists and have gagged academic debate on constitutional change.

In China, power struggles at the top are an art—subtlety over showdown. Hu has proved an artful tactician.

He ordered study sessions on the constitution, ostensibly a push to strengthen the rule of law. But analysts said it also could be seen as a swipe at Jiang for clinging on to the top military job in violation of the constitution.

“Jiang cannot find fault with Hu for stressing the constitution,” said a Chinese political commentator who writes under the pseudonym, Liang Kezhi.

“But every time Hu stresses the constitution, it makes Jiang uncomfortable all over because, according to the constitution, the party commands the gun,” he said.

Hu also scrapped the staple send-off and welcoming ceremonies for Chinese leaders, which for years brought out all the top hierarchy for obligatory smiles and handshakes when the top man went abroad.

Analysts said the move could allow Hu to avoid the awkward dilemma of whether to attend when Jiang went abroad one day.

“The nation’s leaders are not supposed to send off subordinate officials going abroad. Hence, attendance could make people think Jiang is still No. 1. But absence could be interpreted as disrespect,” said a government official.

On the diplomatic front, China was sharply criticized in early 2003 for not doing enough to rein in unruly neighbor North Korea in a nuclear crisis.

Now it is enjoying kudos for bringing Pyongyang to the negotiating table, a break from its traditional policy of non-interference in other countries’ internal affairs.

And Hu so far has appeared less antagonistic toward rival Taiwan as it heads into an election year, although China still regards steps taken by President Chen Shui-bian as provocative.

“Hu and Jiang may have differences in tactics but not in strategy,” Kou said.

Hu has also used a crackdown on corruption, as well as the SARS crisis, to chip away at Jiang’s power base. Cheng Weigao, former party boss of the northern province of Hebei who was close to Jiang, was detained on corruption charges.

But official investigations into a property scandal surrounding Shanghai tycoon Zhou Zhengyi, who is reportedly close to Jiang’s protégés, have yielded little.

“Hu cannot exceed what Jiang can tolerate,” said the first Chinese political scientist.

Reuters

A 1925 tourist in Manila

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

A CERTAIN Juan Potous came by a little over a quarter of a century since his country had ceded the Philippines to the United States in the Treaty of Versailles. He was pleasantly surprised to find that street names and places still bore Spanish names such as Novaliches, Issac Peral (UN Avenue), Sanchez Barcaiztegui, Alvarado, General Solano, Carriedo, Alejandro Farnesio, Azcarraga, Balmes, Basco, Benavides, Marques de los Castillejos, Churruca, Duque de Alba, Echague, Elcano, Marques de Comillas, O’Donell. Other names were de España, Lepanto, El Dorado, Estado, Estrella, Evangelista, Fraternidad, Alhambra, Galicia, Globo de Oro, Granate, Habana, Herran, Hormiga, Industria, Jaboneros, Colorado, Mejorada, Misericordia, Muralla, Numancia, Palma, Panaderos, Paraiso, Peñalosa, Peñafrancia, Peñarubia, Reina Regente, Salsipuedes, Tenorio, Toneleros. (I name them so that you may take note of how many have been changed since then.)

Aside from that there was the Calle de Tetuan that started in the Plaza Santa Cruz and ended in Gandara. (Recently renamed Padilla, a politician whose family still owns a lot of Binondo/San Nicolas properties.) The most frequented thoroughfare it seems at the time was none other than the Paseo de la Luneta. The boulevard had been christened Dewey but people continued to call it Boulevard de Cavite to the delight of resident Spaniards to whom the name Dewey did not elicit any happy memories. (Since renamed Roxas but the Spanish community dwindled to a minimum number and the younger generation tuned in to US culture.)

Potous found the Luneta Nueva or New Luneta one of the most “delicious” natural places in Manila because the hand of man had done little to embellish it, i.e. the lily wasn’t gilded. Oddly enough the custom of taking the air at the Luneta from the Spanish times was continued but this time instead of carriages there was an interminable line of cars at the border of the paseo with distinguished ladies, respectable gentlemen and beautiful girls inside them. Nobody though got down to walk around or greet each other.

Potous was struck by the Filipinas’ habit of wearing their hair long and hanging down their backs without any hairpins. He was also impressed by the elegance of the inhabitants of Manila. Everyone appeared to be in white or ecru perhaps since he describes their shirts as a species of transparent gauze (piña?), richly decorated.

Women wore long skirts with a train pinned to one side prompting him to wonder of what use it had since it was never let loose. The materials favored were brightly colored, the women’s arms and shoulders for the most part bare. To cover the low neck line, especially in the street, a large shoulder piece *de quita y pon* (literally, take out and put), usually white and decorated with large flowers was draped on. Their feet and legs were bare of stockings and as a rule no one went unshod but wore slippers of red velvet.

The Spanish colony in the islands conceived of constructing a building that would be called Casa de España to house its consulate, the Casino Español and its Chamber of Commerce. Thus an extensive property was bought in what then was considered the best place in Manila. The project owed its success no less to a contractor called Farre (Luneta Hotel), el Conde de Peracamps a.k.a. Antonio Melian (El Hogar) and Gen. Las Heras.

In the center of the building extended a hall of “colossal” proportions called the Salon de Actos (Arcos?). From its ceiling hang huge chandeliers and the floors were of hardwood donated by Doña Trinidad Ayala de Zobel. From the sides radiated reception rooms, dressing rooms, a general dining hall and a lecture room where free Spanish lessons were taught. Enormous Japanese and Chinese jars as well as other pieces of porcelain decorated the salons.

There was a beautiful terrace leading to the tennis courts and the fronton of *pelota* as well as a more informal dining area. Facing the terrace as well was the library, and a barbershop.

Potous had the pleasure upon his arrival of attending a night time fiesta celebrated in the church of San Pedro de Malate to solemnize the feast of Our Lady of Remedies. The church was full of parishioners and the candles in front of the virgin’s image looked as though they could total hundreds. There were more than six persons taking care of installing the candles and keeping them lighted.

Although the interior of the church appeared to glitter in gold, the fair celebrated in the plaza of Malate and the streets around were more interesting to him because they reminded him of the fiestas of Spain by the number of stalls where food and other articles were for sale. A seemingly disorderly multitude of natives, mestizos and foreigners circulated through the aisles between the stalls.

Among the things for sale were sweets that seemed to form pyramids in the stall counters. The most extraordinary were the names completely unknown to the author of course: *Madoya, dinuguan con poto, goto, ukoy, palitaw, buche, bico, bichobicho and pilipit*. Fruits such as *sincamas, lanzones, santol, lomboy, casuy, apulid, sungay kalabao, camachile, cabezas de negritos and balatong* were sold. Old timers assured him that the verbanas had lost their vitality and gaiety since Spanish sovereignty had ceased over the archipelago. But this wasn’t apparent to Potous who saw in this fiesta in Malate the vestiges of that old Spanish culture.

(“Un Año en Manila,” Juan Potous y Martinez, 1925)

Hard facts

YOUNG BLOOD

Elmer Andes Jr.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHEN I told a friend that I had decided not to vote in the coming elections, she bluntly retorted that such apathy is something this country doesn’t need right now. I agree. But what this country needs is something I don’t think any of the prospective candidates have the balls to offer.

It is amusing, if not depressing, to realize that this nation as a whole suffers from a human tendency that is usually attributed to a single individual: denial. Like a terminal patient, this country refuses to believe that it is suffering from a fatal disease until it is too late. As a citizen, I, for one, am tired of hearing statements that seek to convince that the Philippines is a good country.

Wake up. It is not. The Philippines is poor, backward and is one of the worst places in the world to be in.

Now wouldn’t it be more sensible to vote for someone who would bluntly declare hard facts in your face like that instead of flowery rhetoric? Allow me to cite some examples:

The Philippines is one of Asia’s growing economies. Right. As far as I know, we have been a growing economy ever since World War II. I never heard anywhere or at any point that the Philippines had already “grown” to a strong economy. I will judge that the economy is getting better once I stop seeing 5-year old girls carrying babies and risking their lives just to beg for coins in the streets.

Open your eyes. The economy is at an all-time low.

The Philippines is proud to be Asia’s most fluent English-speaking country. True, but how does the number of English-speaking citizens compare to the greater majority of its citizens who cannot even read? Our largest social contribution to the world bespeak our level of commitment to education: domestic helpers and caregivers.

Think again. Education in the Philippines is mediocre. Our citizens are forced to labor as other people’s servants.

We are proud of our democracy. Please. This country’s last vestige of a democratic process—the election—is a sham. Votes are sometimes added, sometimes not counted, and most usually bought. Okay, Mr. Congressman, even if you say in defense that you did not spend a single peso in vote buying, you still offered something to your constituents that you rarely redeem—hope. And no, that basketball court with your name on it doesn’t count.

Excuse me. This country is run by corruption, not democracy. And we are not fledglings at it.

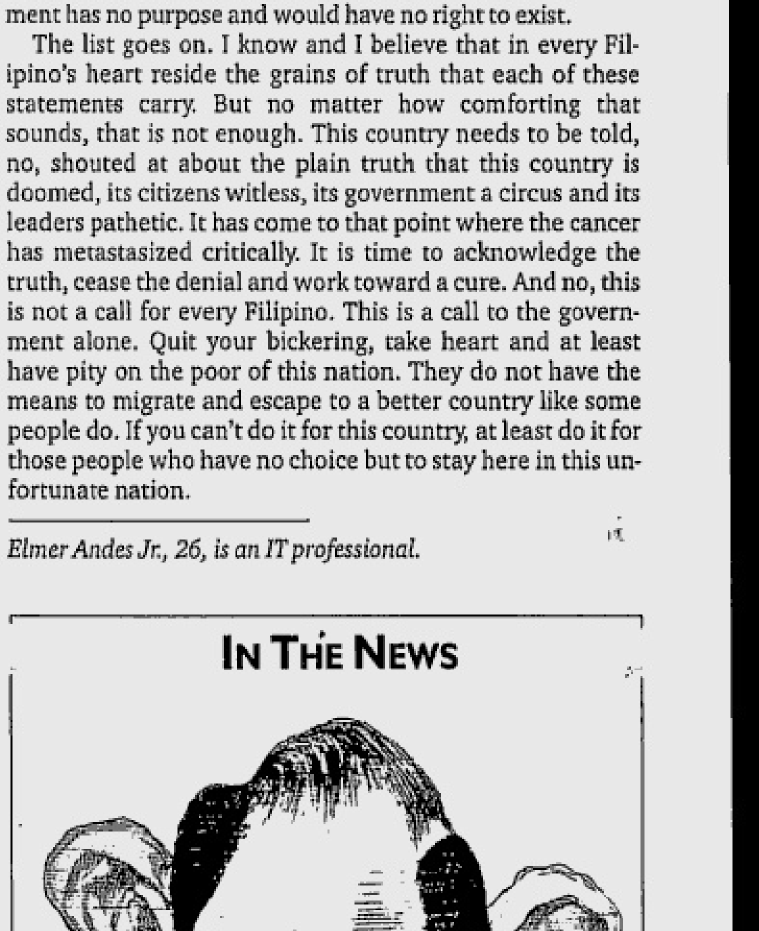
We must all work together. We can’t let the government do all the work and take all the blame. Hurray. After neglecting education, the government expects the common *masa* to share in nation-building. After flaunting its means of acquiring and maintaining power, leaders in government literally shy away from the responsibility inherent with it. A wake up call for you leaders: you have the money acquired from your ancestral wealth, businesses and stock investments, your diploma from Ateneo, your Ph.D. from Harvard and what have you—you should be the one to think. Show this nation what it had paid for with its votes. Its people are already preoccupied with how to get their next meal and they would rather have you do the thinking.

I beg your pardon. The government is responsible for steering this nation. Without that responsibility, the government has no purpose and would have no right to exist.

The list goes on. I know and I believe that in every Filipino’s heart reside the grains of truth that each of these statements carry. But no matter how comforting that sounds, that is not enough. This country needs to be told, no, shouted at about the plain truth that this country is doomed, its citizens witless, its government a circus and its leaders pathetic. It has come to that point where the cancer has metastasized critically. It is time to acknowledge the truth, cease the denial and work toward a cure. And no, this is not a call for every Filipino. This is a call to the government alone. Quit your bickering, take heart and at least have pity on the poor of this nation. They do not have the means to migrate and escape to a better country like some people do. If you can’t do it for this country, at least do it for those people who have no choice but to stay here in this unfortunate nation.

Elmer Andes Jr., 26, is an IT professional.

IN THE NEWS



House Speaker Joe de Venecia

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100% reliable counting machines

WE wish to clarify some points raised by Rina Jimenez-David and Conrado de Quiros in their columns dated Oct. 23 and 24, 2003, respectively, on the issue of the automated counting and canvassing of votes. A similar subject matter was also tackled by Solita Monsod in her previous columns.

The Mega Pacific Consortium (MPC), composed of five big IT companies led by the Mega Pacific e-Solutions Inc. (MPEI) won the bidding of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) for the P1.3-billion automation project—the second phase of the Comelec Modernization Program—based on standards and criteria set by the poll body.

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) awarded the project to the consortium after it went through the normal bidding process. This is obviously the reason why a misinformation campaign against the winning bidder has been circulating.

The charge that the members of the consortium have no track record, be it individually or collectively, in information technology is false. The incorporators of MPEI, for example, are entrepreneurs that have dealt with the Comelec in the supply of different paraphernalia and solutions for more than two decades.

The other member of the consortium, the SK C&C, the South Korean firm that will provide the automated counting machines, has the technology and expertise in the conduct of the computerization process. Its experience is unassailable, considering that it provided machines for the 2002 local and national elections in South Korea, covering the counting machines covering 50 million voters.

While there were minor glitches in nine of the 30 machines initially tested by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), these birth pangs were easily and immediately addressed, and on retesting the machines were found 100 percent reliable.

On Oct. 24, 2003, a letter from the DOST, through its agency, the Metals Industry Research and Development Center (MIRDC) certified that the vote counting machines are working at 100 percent accuracy rate from the previous 99.9995 percent. The information was relayed by MIRDC executive director Rolando T. Viloria to Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Z. Borra.

We would like to point out that the machine to be used is a stand-alone equipment that has no keyboard and network connections thus rendering it free from manipulation. Human intervention is limited merely to the Comelec election officer and ACM personnel authorized to operate the machine.

The most important feature of the MPC's stand-alone equipment is its ability to detect fake, spurious and recycled or previously read ballot, in contrast to what was offered by its competitor.

—ALFREDO V. LAZARO JR.,
spokesperson, Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc., Unit 707 Ayala Tower One and Exchange Plaza, Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

FPJPM
FPJPM
FPJP

Thanks for the lesson and the example

TODAY we add our voices to the growing number of voices heard all over our country in support of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and what he stands for. We have worn black, marched alongside the throngs who believed in his cause, joined the noise barrage. We have walked the talk! We have prayed with the clergy and the laity. We have prayed alone, in our homes, in our offices, in the fields. We prayed both in supplication and celebration. Why? Because in one fell swoop, he has exposed the wolves in sheep's clothing, and shown the nation the falsehood heaped upon his person and his office!

But we are not merely blind followers. In the face of charges and countercharges, we have paused, listened, carefully weighed the issues and found them to be not only wanting, but patently false!

But beyond this we would like to thank him for opening our eyes, for standing firm on his principles, and for remaining unafraid to "declare war" upon those who would want to subvert the truth in pursuit of their own malicious, personal agenda.

In these dangerous times, when anarchy stands poised at the very doorstep of democracy, we thank him for agreeing to no compromise, hence refusing to sell the Filipino short. He showed the way when he presided over the Estrada impeachment trial. But those who know him better, know that this was in keeping with his character, and that he could not have taken another road.

His impeachment has become a fight between the good and the bad; between those who have the good of the country first, and those who have it last. We condemn the foul deed of the complainant-representatives in the harshest possible terms. Right-minded Filipinos will repudiate them in the coming polls.

In the end, we pray he will take even more courage in the knowledge that evil will not triumph because he have inspired those who wish the best for our country and our people to rise and stand against those who only have themselves in mind.

It is our honor and privilege to stand with you, Sir!

—ANNABELLE TAN-AMOR
AND 18 OTHER SIGNATORIES,
Sto. Niño Village, Cebu City

Dire prospects if FPJ runs

SUPPORTERS of Fernando Poe Jr. urging him to run for the presidency in the 2004 elections are claiming that they are already 99.9 percent sure that he will run.

In the convention of the Filipinos for Peace, Justice and Progress Movement (FPJPM) held recently, all that "Da King" was able to utter by way of confirmation is "*Salamat sa suporta. Balang araw makakaganti din ako sa inyo.*" Don't we just fervently wish that he was talking about more entertaining movies as a means of expressing his gratitude for this support? But this is too much wishful thinking.

The mounting signs that he will indeed run are already causing market jitters. Analysts have long described the market in a "wait and see" mode due to FPJ's uncertain candidacy saying that investors will definitely pull out their investments once FPJ announces his intention to run. True enough, last week, in the face of strong indications that FPJ will run, stock trading plummeted.

If investors can be scared out of their wits by a mere "possibility" of FPJ running, imagine what will happen to our economy if he indeed runs and wins in 2004! This will be a repeat of the Erap years. Maybe worse, given FPJ's inexperience in politics and economic management.

—LEA NATIVIDAD,
lea_natividad@asia.com

No reproach toward GMA

I READ with interest the story of Joselle Badilla of the PDI's Mindanao Bureau titled, "GMA wooing me back—Loren." (PDI, 10/20/03)

I appreciate how my statements were religiously reflected by the writer, but allow me to clarify that there never was any intention on my part to rebuke President Macapagal-Arroyo. The President is my *kumadre* because I am the godmother of her son Mikey and Angela's wedding. As my *kumadre*, I value her respect and words of wisdom. This should not be thought of as unlikely, because as Filipinos I also put a premium on family ties, and in this case my "*pagkukumarehan*" with Ms Macapagal.

I was flattered and humbled by her offer for me to return to Lakas, thus, there is no room for hostility and reproach in my heart and in my mind when I politely explained my regret for not accepting her offer. I shall always be grateful for the support and assistance extended to me by Lakas-CMD, and I shall forever be respectful to Ms Macapagal, not only because of her stature and achievements, but more importantly, for who she is as a person.

I reiterate that my decision was not so much for my own personal comfort and advantage, but more for what is required of me in pursuit of the greater good.

—SEN. LOREN LEGARDA, 6/F Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

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Muslims transforming the world

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I RECENTLY organized a Southeast Asian training workshop on research methods for sexuality and can say with confidence that the most outstanding students were two Muslim women, one from Thailand and the other from the Philippines.

Both women are devout Muslims, wearing their *hijab* (head veil) throughout our training workshop and fasting during the day as part of Ramadan. They are being considered for possible research grants to look into sexual cultures in Muslim communities and throughout the workshop, you could see how quickly they were processing new perspectives and methodologies, eager to apply these toward understanding their communities within the context of Islam.

The two women reminded me that Islam is a living faith and that all throughout the world, within the Islamic ummah (community), women and men are intensely involved in looking at Islam's place in the 21st century.

I've written in the past about "Islamaphobia" in the west, in the way the mass media (including movies) depict Muslims, especially Arabs, as backward, fanatical and violent. But there is also a more subtle but terribly dangerous trend and this is western leaders like Bush prescribing "democracy" and "human rights" to Muslims. The rhetoric is of course often a way to justify US intervention in the affairs of Muslim countries. In a speech last Thursday Bush proclaimed that "the establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution."

It is such arrogance that alienates the world from the US government, with its insinuations that Arabs and the Muslim world need the west to teach them democracy and human rights.

Bush is probably unaware that from the 8th to 13th centuries, while the western world came under the authoritarian control of the Catholic church, one which discouraged any kind of critical thinking, Islamic scholars were developing science, technology, medicine, mathematics to new heights, taking seriously the Quran (Koran)'s injunction: "Seek knowledge, from the cradle to the grave."

One Muslim leader talks about how this golden age was reversed: "Halfway through the building of the great Islamic civilization came new interpreters of Islam who taught that acquisition of knowledge by Muslims meant only the study of Islamic theology. The study of science, medicine, etc. was discouraged. Intellectually the Muslims began to regress. With intellectual regression the great Muslim civilization began to falter and wither. . ."

That passage comes from a recent speech by former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, the very same speech attacked by the western press for carrying anti-Semitic (anti-Jewish) remarks. I was able to track down the full text of the speech and realized, after reading it, that it was in fact more of a harsh critique of what Muslims had done to Islam.

"Today," Mahathir lamented, "we, the whole Muslim ummah are treated with contempt and dishonor. Our religion is denigrated. Our holy places desecrated. Our countries are occupied. Our people starved and killed."

It was in this context that Mahathir called on Muslims to shape up. He cites examples of strategizing by the prophet Mohammed, and decries the present: "We fight without any objective, without any goal other than to hurt the enemy because they hurt us. Naively we expect them to surrender. We sacrifice lives unnecessarily, achieving nothing other than to attract more massive retaliation and humiliation."

He goes on to deliver the controversial paragraph: "We are actually very strong. 1.3 billion people (Muslims) cannot be simply wiped out. The Europeans killed 6 million Jews out of 12 million. But today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them."

I am not trying to justify the anti-Jewish remarks, as well as another passage where he claims Jews "invented and successfully promoted socialism, communism, human rights and democracy so that persecuting them would appear to be wrong. . ." There Mahathir goes off track, but I can see his point arguing that Muslims have lagged far behind the world, and need to introduce reforms.

Mahathir can be offensive and bigoted but his trenchant critique of fellow Muslims shows that Islam is not a monolithic and dogmatic community. Muslims themselves are urging reforms, and that includes the area of women's rights, another favorite excuse of Bush and other western leaders to justify their interference with Muslim affairs.

No doubt, men have had a powerful hold over Islamic institutions but the western media rarely talks about how Muslim women have also been able to create space and to fight for their own rights. In fact, women's movements for literacy and for the right to vote emerged in Arab countries far ahead of many western countries.

It is not surprising that the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded this year to Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer and human rights activist who has a brilliant grasp of law, theology and history. For example, in one of her essays on children's rights, she notes that under Iran's penal code, which is strongly drawn from Islamic religious jurisprudence, a girl aged nine and a boy aged 15 can be punished as adults for crimes. She asks why a 9-yearold girl can be thrown in jail while a woman of 40, even if a university professor, will still need her father's permission to marry. Rather than proposing an overhauling of Islamic laws, she points out how, in history, Islamic jurisprudence has actually been very progressive, adapting to the needs of the times, and that Iranian law needs to carry on this progressive legacy to correct today's injustices.

All throughout the Muslim world, including Mindanao, Muslim women and men are asking bold questions and proposing even bolder answers. They will transform the Muslim world, and if we listen hard enough to them, Americans and Filipinos just might learn a few lessons too as we try to overcome the oppressive dogmatism of our own religious and political ideologies.

* * *

Comments to miguel@ pinoykasi.net

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23 Aurora St., Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-8938
E-mail: pdivis@skyinet.net

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Syndicate trafficking in women bared

ANGELES CITY—Women activists warned of an illegal recruitment syndicate involved in the sex trafficking of women from Mt. Pinatubo resettlements and urban centers in Pampanga.

The Ing Makababaying Aksyon (IMA or Pro-Women Action) here and the Women's Legal Bureau in Manila issued the alert in local communities after they and the Philippine Center on Transnational Crimes in Camp Crame rescued at least 31 women from a recruitment agency on Nov. 7.

The victims, residents of Pampanga, Bicol and Mindanao, were recovered from the house of the suspect, identified as Nora Garcia, at BF Homes Executive Village in Parañaque City.

PCTC operatives, led by Maj. Loreto Delelis and Maj. Sheldon Jacavan, arrested Donna Garcia, Lorna Pingul and Garcia's daughter Jaya Trinidad. They are detained in Camp Crame. The recruiter is still at large.

In a statement, IMA Executive Director Susan Pineda said several equipment and paraphernalia used in making counterfeit passports were seized in the house.

Pineda said seven other victims from Angeles City were not found in the house and were transferred to another safe house.

They were recruited from Barangays Sapang Bato, Malabanias, Margot, Pulung Cacutud and the EPZA resettlement where unemployment was high even 12 years after the 1991 eruptions of the Pinatubo volcano.

Dozens more recruited women remained undocumented and IMA was receiving requests to locate them, Pineda said.

According to her, two victims, Analiza Tria and Agnes Pacheco, escaped on separates dates by jumping from a 10-foot barbed wire fence of the recruiter's home.

"They told us about the maltreatment they suffered and their forced detention by Nora Garcia," Pineda said.

Families of victims couldn't locate their kin because they had been sent abroad with passports bearing different names, she said.

A victim, Carlota Cunanan, recently placed a long distance call reporting she was being moved from Jordan to Syria then to Egypt with several Filipino women. She sounded off frantic pleas for help, her sister said.

Pineda said those countries have rising cases of women trafficking.

In the statement, IMA and the WLB condemned the inaction of the National Bureau of Investigation despite the intercession of National Housing Authority General Manager Edgardo Pamintuan, this city's former mayor.

The rescued victims expressed disappointment over the mishandling of their cases by the mayor's office and the city's gender and development office. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Men wearing SWAT shirts free girl held for ransom

ANGELES CITY—After five days in captivity, a kidnap victim was released unhurt on Sunday reportedly after her family raised at least P5 million in ransom for her abductors.

The victim's family on Monday declined to confirm or deny paying money for her freedom. She was taken at gunpoint last Nov. 5 by heavily armed men wearing uniforms of policemen belonging to the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team.

The abductors first tried to rob the jewelry store she was working for here but aborted the plan when police pursued them. They took the victim instead as a shield.

Sources in Camp Olivas, the police headquarters in Central Luzon, said the family had refused to cooperate with authorities since the first day.

The victim, in her 30s, was released at past 10 a.m. in the City of San Fernando, south of here.

The ransom money was reportedly delivered somewhere in Guiguinto, Bulacan. A source said the family borrowed money to raise the amount. Initially, the abductors demanded P20 million.

She was the first known kidnap victim in this city this year. Four persons, scions of Filipino-Chinese families with businesses, were either abducted or kept in safe houses in Angeles City in January, February, June and September last year. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Dole-out food downs 60 Cebu fire victims

CEBU CITY—Food poisoning downed at least 60 people who lost homes in a fire in Sitio Bagumbayan, Barangay Tinago Friday.

The fire victims suffered diarrhea and vomited on Sunday after eating food served by two caterers hired by the Cebu City government.

Twenty-three persons were brought to the Cebu City Medical Center. Ten were sent home shortly after. Some 37 others were rushed to the Don Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center.

Most of the patients were released yesterday.

The 60 were among the 988 people who lost homes Friday afternoon when fire broke out in a slum in Sitio Bagumbayan, Barangay Tinago.

The city government through the Department of Social Welfare and Services promised to feed the fire victims for three days.

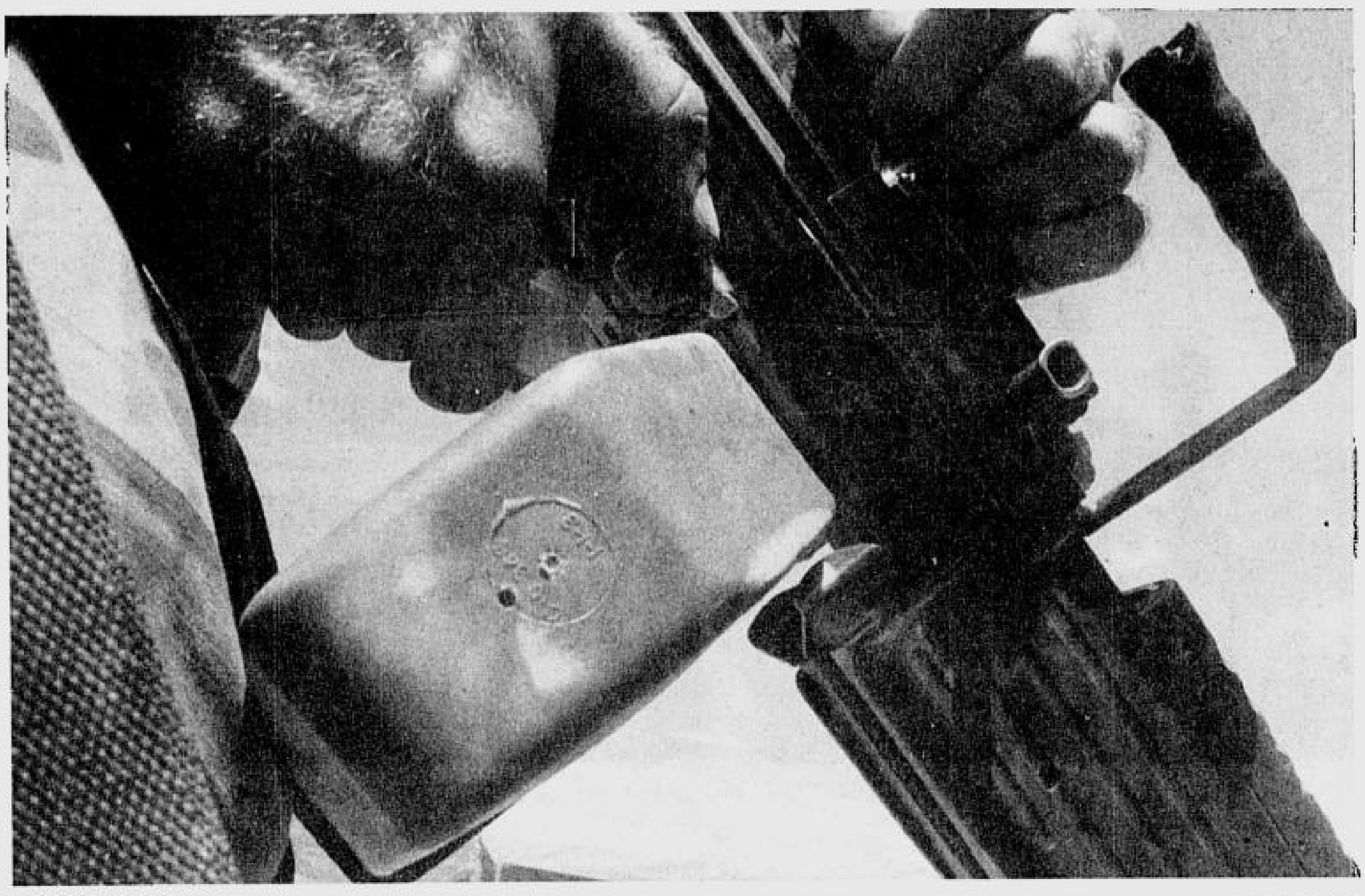
But on Sunday, Jasmine Manapsal, one of the fire victims, said they started to feel ill at 2 p.m.

Manapsal said she believed food triggered the vomiting and diarrhea.

They were served sausage, ham and egg for breakfast and noodles and beef for lunch.

Cebu City Councilor Gerardo Carillo vowed to press charges if tests would show the sickness was caused by the food.

Vice Mayor Michael Rama suspended the services of Lourdes Catering Service and Gotiaco Catering Service pending investigation. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*



GUN POWER
DENNIS SABANGAN/EPA
A US Marine officer teaches a Filipino soldier how to load ammunition into a Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) M249 machine gun during live fire exercises in Capas, Tarlac that are part of Talon Vision, new war games participated in by at least 900 American soldiers.

CAVITE HEIST

3 wounded as cops shoot it out with ATM robbers

DASMARIÑAS, Cavite—Three people, including a college student, were wounded in a 30-minute gunfight that looked like a scene in a Filipino action movie after police chased a group of suspected members of a big-time robbery syndicate who had ransacked an automated teller machine (ATM) in Barangay Burol this town yesterday.

Cavite police director Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales identified the arrested suspects as Dodong Go, Oscar Viola, Rodrigo Domingo and Antonio Solis.

Wounded were SPO1 Joven Mujares, security guard George Banilla and student Raga Dumlog who was hit by a stray bullet in the body during the gunfight.

Rosales said the suspects, together with six other unidentified armed men, forcefully entered the small ATM branch of the Development Bank of the Philippines along Congressional Avenue at around 10:30 a.m. and tried to disarm its security guards.

"The suspects wanted to disarm Banilla and another security guard who were on duty at the said ATM machine. The two tried to fight back and shoot it out but were overwhelmed by the high-powered firearms of the suspects," Rosales said.

Hero

Banilla suffered a bullet wound in the head and is now fighting for his life in a Cavite hospital while his companion was able to run for safety, police said.

Chief Insp. Rodel Sermonia, town police chief, said the gunshots alerted a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team stationed near the crime scene.

He said the police team quickly went to the area to check out what happened but was met by a volley of gunfire from the suspects who were on board a Mitsubishi Highlander, a Toyota Corolla and a Toyota Lancer.

The three vehicles were later found abandoned in nearby Barangay Salawag.

Mujares was wounded in the initial gunfight. Two police cars were also heavily damaged after the suspects with M-16 and M-14 rifles opened fire at the vehicles.

Rosales immediately ordered the putting up of checkpoints around the town and headed the dragnet operation to collar the suspects.

Chase

Police chased the suspects.

Sermonia said Go and Viola, who had boarded a Starex van, surrendered after they were cornered inside the San Marino City Subdivision.

The two other suspects were arrested in a police checkpoint along the boundary of General Mariano Alvarez and Carmona towns.

Police were able to recover a shotgun and three hand pistols from the suspects but was unable to retrieve even a single centavo from the robbers.

Police said bank officials have yet to disclose the amount of money they lost in the robbery. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

5,000 rally to demand taxes from airport

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—About 5,000 people led by Lapulapu City officials staged a rally in front of the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) to demand payment of real property taxes amounting to P255 million.

The protesters marched from the Lapulapu City Hall to the MCIA domestic departure area, a distance of about two kilometers, where a short program was held.

Among those in the rally were Lapulapu City Mayor Arturo Radaza, Vice Mayor Norma Patalinghug, some barangay officials and city hall employees.

The Lapulapu City government wants the MCIA to pay P255 million in real property taxes, which has been incurred since 1992.

Ahmed Cuizon, MCIA public affairs division manager, said the protest caused minor inconvenience to the employees and to some passengers.

About 30 percent of the passengers of Philippine Airlines flight PR 848 bound for Manila were not able to board the plane on time. It was learned that some passengers were even left behind when the plane took off.

Cuizon said the traffic caused by the protest could be the reason some passengers were late in coming to the airport.

Marcelino Cordova, MCIA acting general manager, met the Lapulapu City officials and promised to bring their demand to the MCIA board of directors. He said the board would take up the protest on Friday.

The MCIA board earlier questioned how the real property taxes were computed.

Radaza vowed to continue protesting until he was sure the taxes would be paid.

He urged the MCIA management to tell the Lapulapu City government how it planned to pay.

Sidewalk vendors say Baguio model for demolition is BF

BAGUIO CITY—Sidewalk vendors condemned the city demolition team which they described as "more destructive, inconsiderate and violent" than the anti-vendor squads of Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

They also said the city government's anti-vending drive had intensified since the visit here of Fernando last October. This was relayed to reporters by Voltaire Tupaz, secretary general of the militant Tongtongan Ti Umili, during a forum here on Monday.

Fernando, who earlier incurred the ire of vendors for the massive clearing of sidewalks in Metro Manila, was also blamed by militant groups for the sudden change of attitude of the demolition team here.

"Like the other local dwellers and visitors, we are enraged to witness incessant scenes of vendors brutally beaten and busted like animals in the show window of the city and sidewalks. Even poor old women were not spared," Tupaz said.

"After Fernando's visit, the demolition team seems to have been emboldened and has become even wilder in its demolition operations against urban poor livelihood and dwellings which the city government considers as eyesores," he added.

However, the city demolition team denied that Fernando had a hand in the implementation of the city's anti-vending ordinance.

Nezita Bañez, head of the city demolition team, said her team does not need someone like Fernando to implement the ordinance.

But she admitted that the crackdown on illegal vendors and the clearing of sidewalks are tied to the Philippine Advertising Congress which the city is hosting starting Nov. 19.

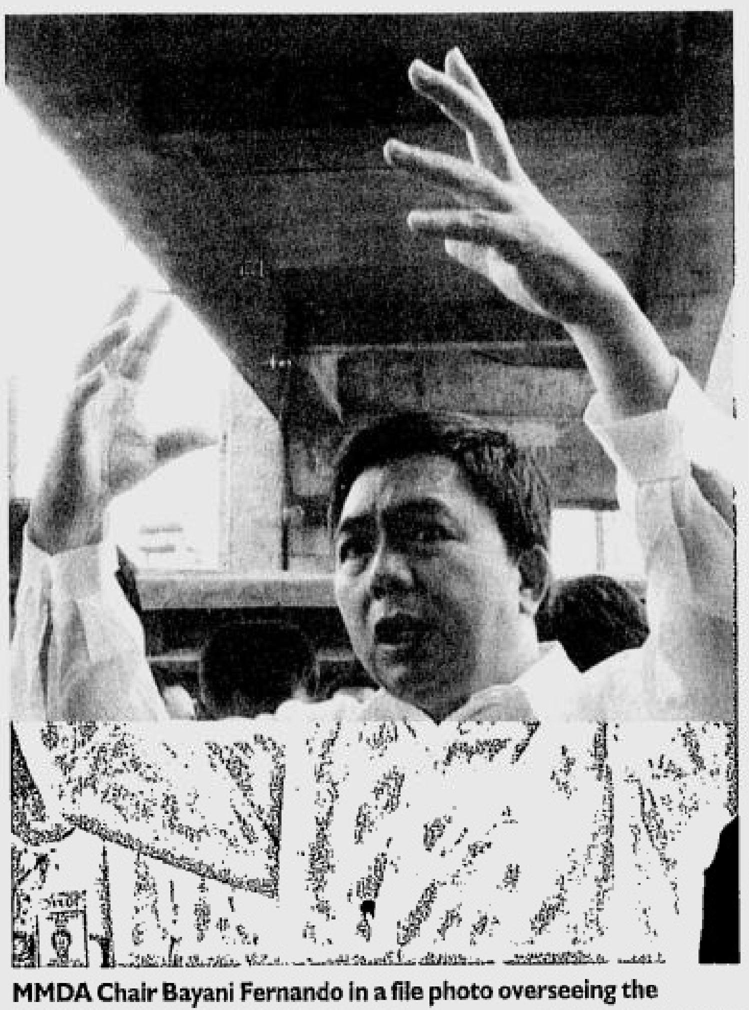
"We never had the chance to talk with Fernando. But in a way, the anti-vending drive and the clearing of passageway has something to do with the ad congress, but this doesn't mean that we are going to lie low after this," she said.

Geraldine Cacho, chair of urban poor group Ornus-Kadamay, said they are worried about the harsh attitude of the demolition team.

"The demolition team has not only demolished our houses, they are also destroying our sources of livelihood," Cacho said.

Cacho said there are 300 vendors who were affected by the crackdown.

"We know that violence happens whenever they have to confiscate our goods because we have to struggle, but it has never been this violent. All of us get beaten and bruised by the demolition team," said Zenaida Fagni, member of the Perfecto Harrison Vendors Association. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando in a file photo overseeing the dismantling of vendors' stalls on Edsa.
ERNIE SARMIENTO/PDI FILE

DENR DECISION

Last nail in Agno plant coffin driven

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

AGNO, Pangasinan—Finally, the last nail has been hammered into the coffin of a controversial cement plant complex proposed to be built near the pristine beaches of Barangay Abagatanen here.

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun stopped the P13-billion project after the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) issued to Taiwan-based Goldsun Cement Corp., the project proponent, had expired.

Gozun's action ended the town residents' almost six-year struggle against the establishment of the plant that started in June 1997.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources first issued the project an ECC on March 29, 1999. The ECC had a life span of two years. Right after it expired, it was granted a two-year extension by the DENR.

That extension ended on March 30 this year.

Letter

In her letter to Winking Lee, Goldsun Cement Corp. president, dated Aug. 18, 2003, Gozun cited the provision of the ECC that said the certificate should be considered automatically revoked if the project failed to start within two years of the certificate's issuance.

She said based on the inspection conducted by the environment management bureau of the Ilocos region, it was determined that the project had not started any activity in the proposed project site.

Lydia Colobong, an Agno resident who fought the cement plant, said while the letter was already about two months old, the residents got a copy only last week.

"We learned from (Gozun) when she was in San Fernando that she already denied the extension of the ECC, but it was difficult to get a copy of it," Colobong said.

The residents planned to hold a thanksgiving Mass and a fluvial parade on Nov. 22 to celebrate their victory in the protracted campaign against the project.

The protests gained national attention as residents expressed fears that the construction of the cement plant would simply destroy the village's and the town's ecological systems.

Attention

Proponents of the cement plant tried to win support for the project by promising that it would create jobs for the residents and much-needed income for the town.

But the residents refused to buy the proponents' line saying there was no assurance that the proposed plant would spare the town's ecological system and environment from destruction.

Gozun's decision came at a time when proponents of the plant continued to cling on to the prospect of starting the plant's construction and its operations.

Cops say they're helpless vs vigilantes

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The local police has admitted helplessness in solving the series of summary executions here unless it got the support of citizens and various groups.

Senior Supt. Jorge Aquisap, city police chief, said civilian support is very vital to allow police to once and for all put an end to the rash of vigilante-style killings that were perpetrated by motorcycle-riding gunmen.

Aquisap said that lack of manpower exacerbated by the non-cooperation of civilian witnesses prevented the local police from solving the killings.

The city with a population of about more than 400,000 is being secured by only about more than 300 policemen.

Earlier, Councilor Eduardo Leyson III, chair of the city council's committee on peace and order and police matters, revealed that about 140 persons had already been summarily executed by suspected anti-drug vigilante groups.

Most of the victims were linked to the illegal drug trade here.

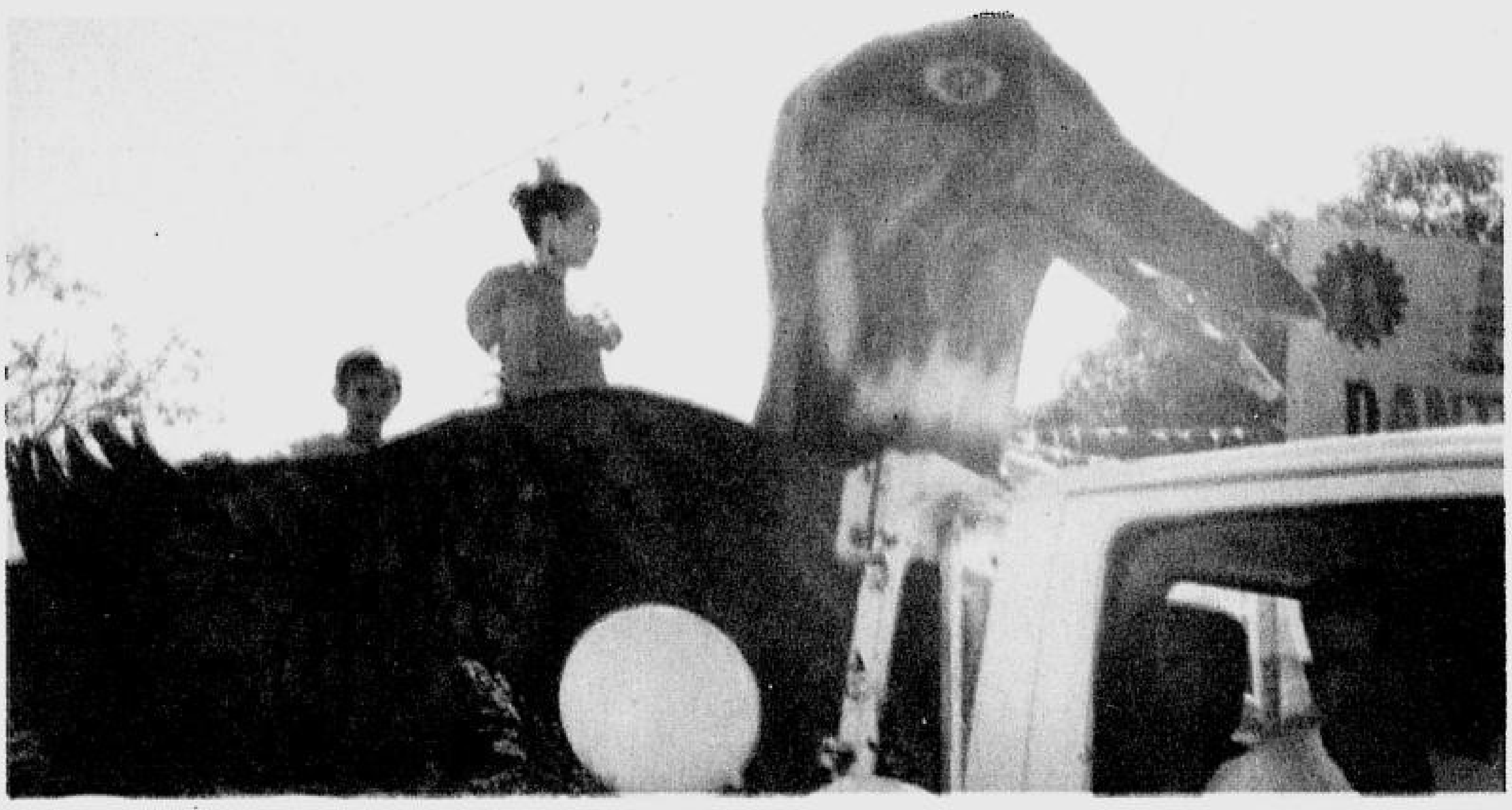
"The local police are helpless in solving these killings unless the witnesses would cooperate with us. They should give the description of the killers so we can trace who are they and where they come from," Aquisap said.

The city council is planning to call the local police officials during the council's regular session on Wednesday to shed light on the unsolved series of killings.

Many sectors, particularly the human rights advocates, have aired their complaints on the unabated vigilante-style killings in the city.

But the protests go unheeded as the killings continued.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau



VICTORIA's duck industry, big enough to sustain a town's economic activity is portrayed by a modeled duck big enough to carry children taking part in the town's Itik Festival.

PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Town celebrates 'duck day' in honor of key industry

VICTORIA, Laguna—This town, which claims to be the "New Pateros" or center of the multimillion-peso duck industry of the Philippines, is holding its Second Annual Itik (Duck) Festival from Nov. 9 to Nov. 15 to celebrate its 54th foundation day.

Mayor Renato "Ato" Rebong said the occasion hopes to boost the industry's pivotal role in the economic life of the town's population.

Rebong said the town's duck industry could be a billion-peso economic activity.

Former President Elpidio Quirino created this former barrio into a municipality, which consists of seven barangays, on Nov. 15, 1949 through Executive Order No. 282 and named it Victoria, after his daughter.

The town, which has population of 27,209, is located some 90 kilometers south of Manila.

Municipal records showed that the duck industry that began in 1968 in Victoria had 50 big-time duck-raisers in 2001.

Expected during the occasion is a parade of artistically designed floats mounted with giant duck replicas or decorated with duck feathers, artworks and other symbols contributing to the spirit of the "Itik Festival."

The parade will start from Barangay Masapang, where a giant duck monument is located, and proceed to the town center.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Farmers' groups see price hikes as gov't stops rice importation

AN INCREASE in the prices of rice is looming as various farmers' groups called on the government to allow the arrival of imported rice starting this month until February next year to stabilize prices in the local market.

In a statement, a coalition of farmers' groups composed of the National Confederation of Irrigators' Association, Hukbalahap Veterans, Regional Farmers' Action Council and Philippine Farmers Advisory Board, said they see a rice shortfall next year if the NFA council rejects the entry of the imported rice.

The group's statement said the council is receiving advise to stop the entry of the rice from persons with "self-serving interests."

The groups vowed to help President Macapagal-Arroyo continue carrying out two of her centerpiece programs for farmers—the Farmers as Importers Program (FIP) and the Farmers as Distributors Program (FDP) which were designed to provide additional income to farmers and stabilize domestic rice prices.

The statement said studies were made attributing the increases in rice prices to low local production during lean months which coincide with the period when demand peaks.

This, the statement said, had prompted Ms Macapagal to conceptualize the FIP and FDP which ended in August.

The programs were extended in September during which locally-produced rice flooded the market.

This, the groups' statement said, led to losses for farmers' groups that suffered penalties for their failure to comply with conditions of contracts that they made with rice importers.

History might repeat itself over the refusal of the NFA council to grant the farmers' appeal to extend the President's rice importation program during the lean months of rice harvest in November until February 2004.

The farmers' groups appealed to Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo, through NFA Administrator Arthur Yap and NFA council Chair Angelito Sarmiento, not to listen to advise from the farmers' representative who was appointed to the NFA council, Raul Montemayor.

They also called on Ms Macapagal to step in, saying persons out to sabotage her programs to improve farmers' economic conditions are still out there.

Group of fish traders vows stop to illegal fishing

SOME of the country's biggest fish traders and exporters have banded as a group called Marine Resources Industry Organization (Marino) Inc. to stop illegal fishing. Marino registered itself with the SEC last week.

In a statement, Milagros Vy, head of Marino and owner of Kenneth Aquamarine Products Inc., said the demand for live fish from the Philippines is growing and tempting unscrupulous groups into financing illegal fishing methods.

Vy said Marino decided to closely coordinate with non-government organizations and government agencies to prevent the country's marine resources from illegal activities and stop its fast rate of depletion.

Marino, she said, is committed to promote traditional methods of fishing like hook-and-line and support campaigns to stop the use of dynamites or cyanide for fishing.

Vy said her group is also advocating transparency in tests for cyanide made on live fish. Her group, she said, also vowed to police its own ranks and impose a limit on its fish purchase subject to supervision by the Bureau of Fish and Aquatic Resources and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) for fish caught in Palawan.

Townsfolk help save rock formation from road plan

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SAGADA, Mt. Province—Appeals from residents of this tourist town have saved a natural rock formation called the "Old Man of Makkingking" from being demolished to give way to a government road project.

The "old man" is one of the limestone structures in the village of Makkingking and was called such because it resembles an old man's profile.

Mayor Thomas Killip said the Department of Public Works and Highways recommended the blasting of the "old man" in October to improve the 1.4-km road from Barangay Ambasing to the Sagada town center.

The base of the 15-foot structure was obstructing a lane of the road, forcing buses to pass through the opposite lane in that section.

Killip said residents demanded that the rare natural structure be preserved. He said the DPWH eventually gave in to the residents' request and instead lowered the road by digging it.

"It took a bigger expense to do it, but the objective was to save that rock and it was worth it," he said.

An additional P250,000 was spent for the P10-million project to preserve the rock formation, he said.

Killip said many natural rock formations in Sagada have been destroyed to give way to new structures and road improvements.

"But the 'old man' is something else. It will be such a waste if that too, will go," he said.

The landmark is similar to one of the hundreds of stone heads on Easter Island in the Pacific, near Chile.

Killip said the origin of Sagada's "old man" remains a mystery to the town. He said it is best to see the rock formation during sunrise, when the rays of the sun create shadows that highlight the structure.

"When you look at it, it seems that it would fall anytime. But this rock has survived the 1990 earthquake," he said.

Councilor Eduardo Guitelen Sr. said rock formations are among the tourist attractions of the town. A set of rock formations called "Lovers' Lane," which is a cluster of figures of couples, was destroyed by blasting activities several years ago.

"The town enacted ordinances to save the limestone rocks after one of these formations was blasted. If it weren't for these ordinances, we could expect more blasting and destruction of the town's natural wonders," said Guitelen.

ROUNDUP

3 dead in mishap

CAMP OLA, Legazpi City—Three persons died in a road accident when a bus bumped a jeepney in Baao, Camarines Sur on Oct. 31. Police said the victims, Gregorio and Ronilo Gimantog and their nephew Rodolfo Gimantog, of Barangay Lagon, Daet, Camarines Norte were on their way back to Camarines Norte from Buhi, Camarines Sur when their jeepney was bumped by the bus as they tried to avoid a bull cart on the highway of Barangay Agdangan, Baao. A case of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide was prepared against bus driver Efren Basaysay of Bacacay, Albay who is now detained at the Baao town police station.

Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

6th most wanted man falls

SINILOAN, Laguna—The sixth most wanted criminal in Laguna fell in the hands of government authorities on Oct. 26. Police said the suspect, Marlon Basilan, 25, a farmer of Barangay Mendiola, Siniloan, is facing a homicide case for killing a farm caretaker from Barangay Buhay this town last year. Siniloan police and Army soldiers arrested Basilan while he was working on a farm in Barangay Macatad, Siniloan.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Reb faction denies report

LUCENA CITY—The spokesperson of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB) denied that the alleged armed eight communist rebels recently captured by the military in Montalban, Rizal belong to their group. The Southern Luzon Unified Command claimed in a report that the captured rebels belong to the RHB, an armed faction of the mainstream communist movement. The report said the rebels had been tasked with organizing the Manobo tribe in the hinterlands of Rizal province when they were arrested in a surprise raid. Red Olalia, RHB spokesman, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that the alleged rebels could also be Manobos who were in the area only "to interact with other tribal Filipinos, the Aetas or the Dumagats. They have such right." He said this was another violation of the rights of tribal Filipinos to self-organization and self-determination.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

18 patients bolt center

DARAGA, Albay—Eighteen drug dependents being treated at the regional drug rehabilitation center in Malinao, Albay escaped on Tuesday night but seven of them have been captured. During police interrogation, one of the escapees, Esteve Gonzales, said they escaped in protest of the center's harsh handling of the patients. But the center's director brushed aside the accusations and blamed the patients' escape on the heavy treatment and rehabilitation process patterned after the program at the Philippine National Police Bicutan Center for Ultimate Rehabilitation of Drug Dependents.

Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cop chief axed

TAAL, Batangas—This town's police chief, Insp. Armando Tenorio, was relieved 15 hours after four inmates in the police station detention cell escaped on Oct. 24 through the ceiling and into the adjacent Commission on Elections office in this town on Monday. The inmates identified as Honey Lirio, 23, Ronie Agnes, Melvin Martinez, 21, all from Barangay Baya, this town, and Anthony de Villa, 20, from Barangay Butong, escaped at around 1 a.m. by boring a hole in the ceiling of their cell. Batangas police director Senior Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay has issued an order to hunt down the four fugitives.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 PDEA agents killed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A botched drug buy-bust operation in Dasmariñas, Cavite led to the murder of a police officer and a civilian agent of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency on Oct. 30. Police said victims PO2 Maximo Javier and civilian informer Abelardo Mendoza, alias Abing, were found bludgeoned and beaten to death in Barangay Datu Ismael, a known lair of illegal drug peddlers in Cavite. Police have arrested suspect Luis Paredes, 44, who was caught driving the motorcycle that Javier used in the operation but said they have yet to determine if the suspect belonged to the group that killed the victims. PDEA spokesman Senior Supt. Fernando Bondoc said the two were the first casualties of the agency since they started heightened operations against illegal drugs in June.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Peace zones proposed

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Leaders of indigenous tribes in Central Luzon have proposed the establishment of peace zones in their ancestral domains following rising cases of summary executions and military encounters this year. Ben Atenacio, who spoke on the rights of tribal folk in situations of armed conflicts, said creating such zones would help bring peace to the villages of Aeta, Negrito, Baluga, Pugot, Abelling, Agta, Dumagat, Remontado, Bugkalot, Cimaron, Kabihug, Tabangnon, Abiyan, Isarog and I-tom dispersed in the region's seven provinces.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Outstanding researcher

DAGUPAN CITY—Westly Rosario, chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' National Integrated Fisheries Technology Research Center (BFAR-NIFTRC), received the Gawad Kagalingan award for his outstanding research during the Fish Conservation Week celebration. Under Rosario, the BFAR-NIFTRC has become a leading research and development center for the breeding and propagation of important aquaculture species in the region like milkfish, *tilapia*, *ulang*, *dojo*, catfish, aquarium fishes, grouper, silver perch and sea bass. The center has also developed the commercial breeding procedures for various edible and aquarium fishes. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

6 gang members fall

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The leader and five members of a gold counterfeit syndicate Salaguinto Gang were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the killing of a Filipino-Chinese businessman in Angeles City last Oct. 17. Police said the suspects also named a police intelligence agent as the gang's financier and protector. The police officer was reportedly a member of the "Mayuyo/Layson Salaguinto Group Connection" that is involved in swindling, according to a report from the regional police intelligence chief. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

2 kids hit by lightning in Luneta die in hospital

THE ORDEAL of a woman and her two children, who on Saturday were hit by lightning in Rizal Park, has taken a tragic turn.

The two children, Mae Jason Manguerra, 6, and her brother, Mandy John, 4, died at the Manila Doctor's Hospital of burns they suffered from the lightning strike. Their mother, Donalyn Manguerra, is still in the hospital recovering from her wounds.

Doctors found no heartbeat in the children when the children were taken to the emergency room of the hospital on Saturday.

The children's grieving father, Matias Laad, is not only faced with the pain he feels for the death of his children, he is also struggling with the financial aspects of his loss.

He told the INQUIRER yesterday that while the children's bodies have been released and a wake for them is now being held in their rented Pasig home, the hospital has yet to release the death certificates because Laad is hard pressed in settling the P70,000 hospital bill.

Laad, a maintenance man, earns minimum wage.

"I am appealing to everyone," he said yesterday. "Please help us."

Those who wish to help Laad may call him at (0918) 331-2464. *Leila Salaverria*

Boy's family still waiting for builder

By Christine Paita

THE FAMILY of Alvin Arpon, the eight-year-old boy who drowned in a flooded excavation in Makati City on Sunday, has yet to hear from RII Builders Inc., the contractor in charge of the diggings on Chino Roces Avenue.

"I don't need to file a case," said Rowena Arpon, Alvin's mother, who added that she was willing to settle with the contractor.

However, representatives of RII Builders reportedly tried to reach Rowena yesterday but failed.

Meanwhile, the excavation where the boy drowned has been covered with GI sheets starting Sunday night.

Court workers go on mass leave

COURT employees walk the walk of the disgruntled during a rally at the Batasan Complex in Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

KURAPSYON Talamak Na
3 Taon ni GMA Tama Na!

By Tarra Quismundo, Tina Santos and Edson Tandoc Jr.

DISCONTENT over the Judiciary Development Fund and the impeachment case threatening Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has swept the ranks of court employees nationwide, most of whom went on mass leave yesterday at noon.

But most of their colleagues in Quezon City, Navotas and Malabon stayed put in their offices, carrying on with business as usual.

In Manila, some 300 employees of the regional trial courts in the city left their offices at lunch and took the rest of the day off to appeal to the powers that be.

"We only want truth, transparency, and the rule of law in the disbursement of the JDF," said Branch 49 court interpreter Catherine Loja, president of the National Capital Region chapter of the Philippine Association of Court Interpreters.

The court workers gathered in City Hall yesterday, each displaying something red on their clothing.

Loja recently figured in a squabble with RTC Branch 49 Judge Concepcion Vergara, who allegedly slapped Loja and pulled her hair.

Loja remained mum when asked whether she would pursue her intent to file charges against Vergara.

In Malabon City, regional trial court offices look like abandoned public elementary school buildings. People looking in would be surprised to find justice being carried out inside.

Most employees in the Malabon and Navotas courts yesterday chose to stay in their dilapidated offices.

But those who stayed said Davide owed them an explanation. Other employees said the issues surrounding his impeachment have also demoralized their ranks.

Holding a copy of the Court News newsletter explaining the JDF, clerk of court Esmeralda Dizon yesterday compared the newsletter's accounts to their conditions in the Malabon-Navotas courts.

The small courtrooms were ill-ventilated, only a few have old air-conditioning units running. Dizon's office was relatively better, but that was because she and co-employees had brought their own equipment.

The courtrooms and offices also suffer from flooding, especially during rainy season. The walls show traces of the level of flood water. Thick piles of documents have turned yellow.

When the INQUIRER showed up in the clerk of court's office yesterday, the employees even ran after our reporter to air their grievances.

They said that they bring their own benches, chairs, ink and even staple wires.

Abigail Manapat, 29, even brought her own stand fan in their office in 2001. Ma. Lourdes Reccio, 34, also brought her own desk fan.

Another court employee told the INQUIRER that their Hall of Justice has no decent public toilets. He said they did not join the mass leave because "we are very busy... We have a lot of work to do."

In Quezon City, workers had similar complaints.

"The issue is not whether or not we are for or against Davide, the issue here is how government officials may help us improve the poor working conditions," according to a QC RTC worker.

Another worker said she did not go on leave because, she did not "want to add to the chaos." "We have more than enough of it here (in the courtrooms)," said the woman, a court stenographer.

Bleary-eyed poll officials get no rest

THEY had barely slept, but officials of the Caloocan City Commission on Elections were back at work early yesterday morning.

They had a full day on Sunday registering new voters and transferees. The registration should have ended that day at 6 p.m., but city election officer Elmer Kayanan extended the list-up until midnight due to a three-hour brownout that hit the city.

At midnight, a lot of people were still lining up. It was the last day of registration. So the deadline was extended to 3 a.m.

A number of new voters and transferees still showed up yesterday but just like Jose Layug, 55, they were sent home.

Security guard Raymond Baldonado said he had barely slept. After 3 a.m., they still cleaned the office.

About 6 a.m., they were already preparing for the 8 a.m. work. Baldonado said he had not gone home since Saturday. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Boy slain for picking fruit wanted to be an engineer

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

HE WOULD never fulfill his dream of becoming an engineer.

Raymart Dahilog, 10, was shot dead on Saturday, two weeks before his birthday.

Raymart and his friends had asked a neighbor if they could get some guavas. But the tree's owner, Uldarico Ruiz, 47, allegedly went back inside the house, took a gun and fired at the kids, killing Dahilog.

Dahilog's mother, Norma, said yesterday they had already filed murder charges against Ruiz. In an earlier interview, Ruiz kept mum about the case.

"*Kahit paano gumaan ang pakiramdam ko nung naisampa na ang kaso. Pero hindi pa rin nawawala ang sakit* (I felt relieved when we finally filed the case. But the pain lingers)," Norma said in a phone interview.

"*Gusto ko mangyari sa kanya* (Ruiz) *ang ginawa niya sa anak ko*," she said, adding Dahilog's four other siblings were still struggling to get over the incident. Dahilog was the eldest.

Norma added that some non-government organizations had approached the family to offer help.

Rain brings on stench in police headquarters

By Luige del Puerto

MARIKINA cops fear the falling of the rain.

The reason? The rain washes away the sand which covers a leaking septic tank beside the police headquarters, exposing a putrid, almost unbearable smell.

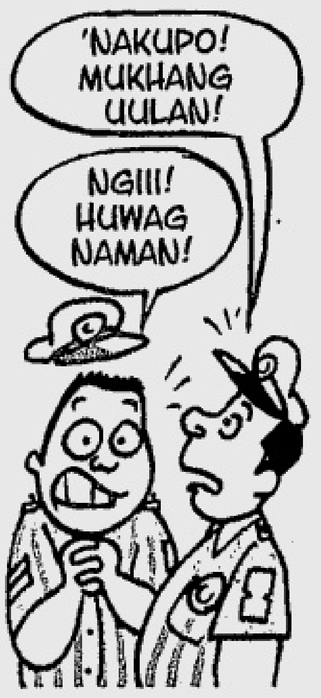
One police official yesterday expressed fear that lawmen would fall ill because of the stench.

Police officers said the problem has gone from bad to worse a month ago, when rain started to fall.

The septic tank also services some 600 inmates of the Marikina City Jail, which is housed on the 5th floor of the unfinished Justice Hall building located at the back of the City Hall.

City police chief Sr. Supt. Felipe Rojas Jr. said he has written city officials twice about the problem, but there had been no action so far.

"It won't take much to solve the problem," Rojas said. "They can dig a deeper hole for the tank, transfer it somewhere, or have it emptied. Every time it rains, we brace ourselves. We know what's coming."



'NAKUPO! MUKHANG UULAN!
NGIII! HUWAG NAMAN!

No water in 2 Metro cities

AREAS along Baesa Road from Ilang-Ilang to Reparo and lateral streets in Caloocan City will have no water for 10 hours starting at 8 p.m. Nov. 12 until 6 a.m. the following day.

Maynilad Water said the service interruption will pave the way for the installation of a district meter on the 250-mm mainline at Baesa corner Ilang-Ilang streets.

In Malabon City, Barangay Concepcion and Barangay Ibaba in Malabon will have no water for 7 hours, starting at 10 p.m. Nov. 12 until 5 a.m. the following day.

Also, Maynilad officials warned that parts of Barangay San Agustin will have low water pressure. Officials said they will be replacing a defective gate valve on Gen. Luna corner Gov. Pascual streets, in Concepcion.

Affected customers may call Maynilad hotline 1626 for the water-rationiong schedule.

No 'overkill' in Naia incident

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PANFILO Villaruel was an honest man when he was chief of the Air Transportation Office (ATO).

"He was never corrupt, Mon, like those before and after him," said a commercial pilot.

Villaruel was full of idealism, said INQUIRER Desk Editor Stella O. Gonzales, who's had personal contact with him during a presidential trip a couple of years ago.

* * *

People who knew him loved him. They feel the police SWAT team did an "overkill" when it shot dead Villaruel and his companion, Navy Lt. Senior Grade Richard Catchillar.

But if you were a member of the airport police SWAT team that barged into the seized airport tower, what would you have done, kneel down before two armed men, who had explosives wired to their bodies, and ask them to surrender?

* * *

Somewhere along the way after he got out of ATO, something must have happened to Villaruel.

Otherwise, why would he seize the airport control tower that he helped build during the administration of President Ramos? Why would he endanger the lives of thousands of passengers of commercial airlines landing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia)?

When he did that, he was no longer the Villaruel that many people came to know. He was already a different man.

Villaruel's drastic move called for a drastic solution.

* * *

Villaruel's last words were, "Surender *na kami* (We surrender)," heard over radio station dzBB, before he and Catchillar were shot dead. He was fielding questions from broadcaster Arnold Clavio when policemen barged into the control tower.

The SWAT team did not know Villaruel was already surrendering. They were geared for combat—they knew Villaruel and Catchillar were armed—and in the heat of the moment, they did what they had to do.

The policemen were trained to stop an armed aggressor. If the aggressor is killed in the process, that is just unfortunate.

The policemen should not be blamed for doing their job.

* * *

Even if Villaruel and Catchillar were neutralized without any harm to other people, that doesn't mean the officials running Naia should be off the hook.

Heads should roll at the Naia, as well as at the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC).

Air travel to the Philippines cannot be made safe if lethargic officials at Naia continue to be there.

* * *

The House of Representatives should respect the decision of the Supreme Court's ruling yesterday that the impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. was unconstitutional.

If the House doesn't respect the decision, then it's driving the country to anarchy. It ignores the rule of law.

If our national leaders can't put their act together, how can you expect people in the lower echelons of government to put things in order?

* * *

If the House of Representatives insists in ramming through Davide's impeachment to the Senate, there will be a constitutional crisis.

And we need a constitutional crisis like a hole in our heads.

The Brat Pack at the House of Representatives should consider this.

* * *

The multi-level marketing (MLM) industry has created a bad name because of the likes of Multitel and G. Cosmos companies, which have gypped millions of pesos from the unsuspecting public.

But to say that all MLM firms are dishonest is lumping together the good and legitimate ones with the unscrupulous.

Recently, the Department of Trade and Industry's national capital region office said that the First Quadrant is not involved in pyramiding scheme.

* * *

First Quadrant manufactures and sells local products and is responsible for reviving the local shoe industry in Marikina.

The firm employs 10,000 workers from the shoe industry. This number benefits more than 50,000 dependents. FQ supports some 200 shoe factories and over 400 manufacturers and suppliers.

Also, the firm helps its more than 170,000 members nationwide earn extra money by selling FQ products.

METROBRIEFS

4 shot by rookies

SIX-YEAR-OLD Sharville Godeluna was playing along Pelaez Street, Proj. 4, Quezon City, when a bullet hit his head. The bullet came from a gun fired by either PO1 Jovino Bautista Marcos Jr., 30, or Carlo Mojica, 29, both of the PNP-SAF. The two new policemen had an argument at 5:45 p.m. Sunday with an unidentified man as they emerged from a drinking spree in the neighborhood. Their foe ran away, so Marcos and Mojica ran after him. They fired their guns as they gave chase. The police allegedly hit Godeluna as well as Eric Llagas, 23; Romulo Christian Alarcon, 20; and Edgar Icaciano, 24, all residents of Proj. 4. *Tina santos*

Dying statement

BEFORE Jeffrey Francisco of Padre Rada Street, Tondo, Manila, breathed his last, he was able to mutter the name of his attacker. Francisco came home at about 11 p.m. Sunday night with a stab wound in the chest. His brother, Roger, rushed him to the hospital but Francisco died along the way. However, he managed to tell Roger that it was a certain "Bebeng" who attacked him. Investigator SPO2 Edgardo Ko said Bebeng stabbed Francisco at the corner of Lakandula Street and Mabuhay Road during an argument. The suspect remains at large. *Leila Salaverria*

Illegal recruiter

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is tracking down Bernadette Mutuc, an alleged illegal recruiter who brought four young women to Malaysia, where they were forced into prostitution. According to an NBI agent privy to the case, Mutuc enticed the four women aged 18 to 19 to work as entertainers in Hong Kong for P35,000 a month. They were instead brought to Pikit, Malaysia, where they were made to provide sexual services to at least three clients a day. *Leila B. Salaverria*

Slapped by guard

A PASAY City Hall employee filed a physical injury complaint yesterday against a security guard assigned at a property of the US government in the city. Noel Claudio, 32, of Maricaban, Pasay, said security guard Jimmy Castillo slapped him twice on the face and threatened to shoot him with his gun. In a statement, Claudio said he just dropped off his wife at the city hall around 9 a.m. when his car's engine broke down outside the gate of the Seafront on F.B. Harrison Street. Castillo and two other security guards approached Claudio and told him to get his car out of the way. When Claudio said that he was just waiting for a tow truck, Castillo allegedly then slapped him and poked a gun at him. *Christine Paita*

Metro cop officials get tongue-lashing from GMA

By Christian Esguerra

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday gave three Metro Manila police district directors a dressing down for their failure to make strides in the government's campaign against drug trafficking.

In a command conference held at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City, Ms Macapagal lost her temper after she went over the reports of three police districts and learned that they had failed to make a dent in the fight against drugs.

During the same conference, the police presented to the President, Eric Tan, an accused operator of a drug laboratory in Cavite.

They failed to impress Ms Macapagal.

"I would like to remind our district directors that your success in the anti-drug campaign is a very important aspect of your job evaluation," Ms Macapagal told the heads of the Eastern, Northern, and Southern police districts.

The President scolded Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, SPD director, for making significant contributions in the first three months of the campaign, only to falter in the next three months.

She reminded Chief Supt. Rolando Sacramento, EPD director, that communities under his jurisdiction are not so big that he could not clear them of drug offenders.

Asked to explain his own failure, Chief Supt. Marcelino Franco, NPD director, told the President that he and other local officials were being careful not to declare a barangay drug-free until they have ascertained that the area no longer had pushers and users.

This irritated the President, who replied: "Are you saying that, for instance, in Pete Bulaong's district, they have declared a barangay is clear even if it's not?"

Ms Macapagal was referring to Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, WPD director.

Baylon; 78

DR. ESTER Carlos Baylon, former education division superintendent of Nueva Ecija, died yesterday after a lingering illness. She was 78.

She is survived by her husband, Juan Baylon, children Drs. Jesse and Honorata Baylon, Erlinda and Nick Calison, Engineer Nestor and Cecille Baylon, and grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Funeraria Nacional on G. Araneta Avenue in Quezon City until Wednesday. On Thursday, her remains will be transferred to Cabanatuan City. Interment will be on Saturday, Nov. 15, at 10 a.m. at the Sagrada Familia Memorial Park in Cabanatuan City.

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

No more VIPs

By Jerome Aning and Tarra Quismundo

MANILA International Airport Authority general manager Edgardo Manda yesterday said he would revoke security inspection exemptions given to some VIPs (very important persons) visiting areas of the airport regarded as "sensitive."

Manda said late Air Force Capt. Panfilo Villaruel Jr. and his aide, Navy Lt. Gerardo Catchillar, could have been exempted from body and bag searches and allowed to carry firearms into a control tower of the MIAA Friday night.

Villaruel was a former transportation assistant secretary and ex-chief of the Air Transportation Office.

"From now on, VIPs visiting the airport would be subjected to more stringent security inspections, particularly when they go to places that are highly restricted areas," Manda told the INQUIRER.

Aside from visitors, VIP status is also accorded to individuals such as top government officials, high-ranking military officers, diplomats and important guests entering the arrival and departure areas.

Following the MIAA incident, Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza Jr. said yesterday that he had directed the Western Police District to maintain a "heightened state of security," as the threat of being "overtaken and taken over" still existed.

Atienza said there was always a danger of a repeat of the MIAA control tower takeover and that such should be avoided.

"I want all policemen to develop a keen eye on shady characters. This is even better than setting up checkpoints and checking the bags of everyone entering a mall," Atienza said, adding that policemen must be trained to acquire the eye for detecting "shady characters."

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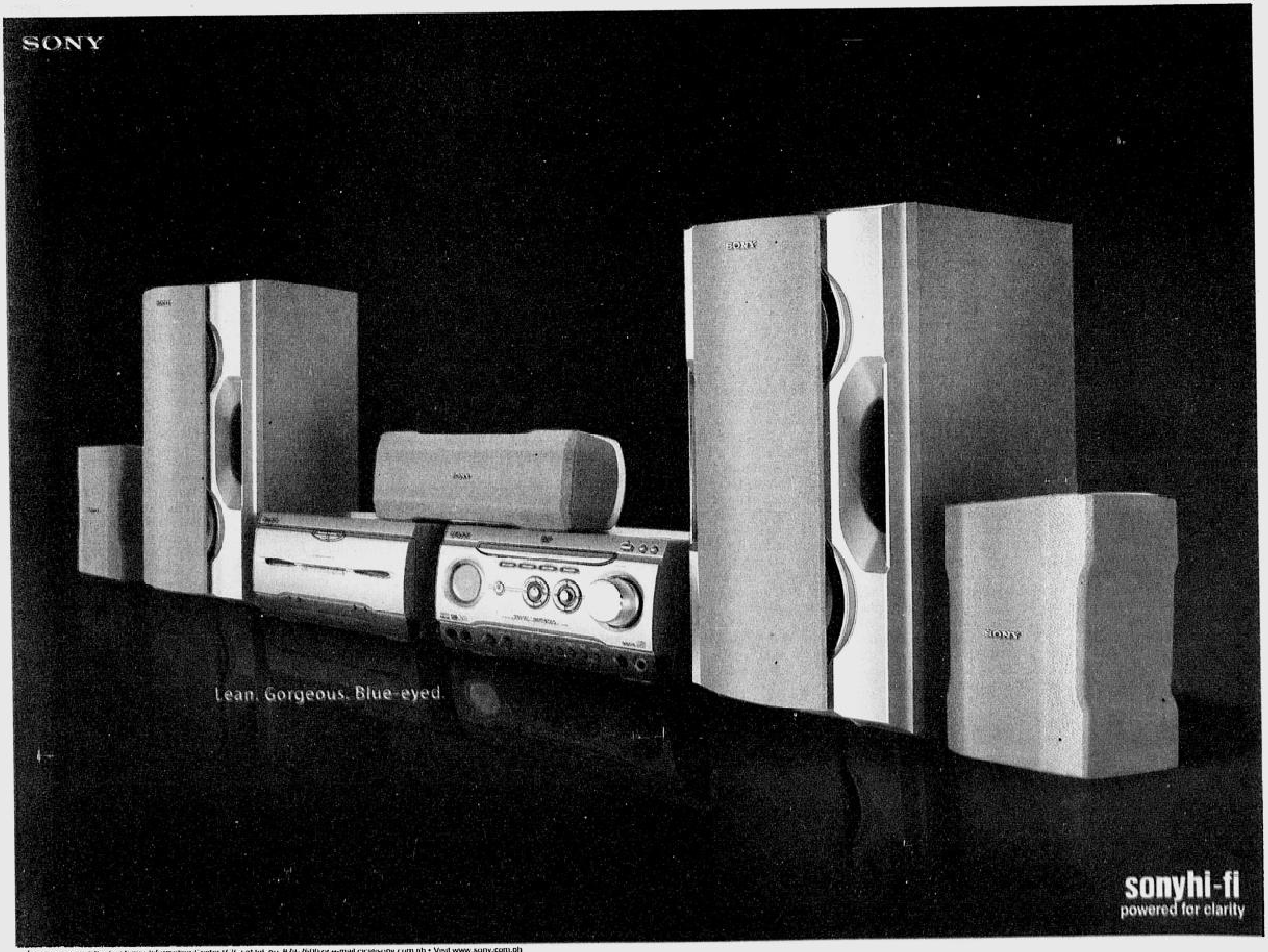

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AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Eagles vs Packers; 10 a.m. (r-5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.); ESPN—Philadelphia visits the frozen tundra of Lambeau Field to meet Green Bay.

BOXING: Barreira vs Kelly; 10:30 p.m.; Solar Sports—Check out Manny Pacquiao's next opponent in action.

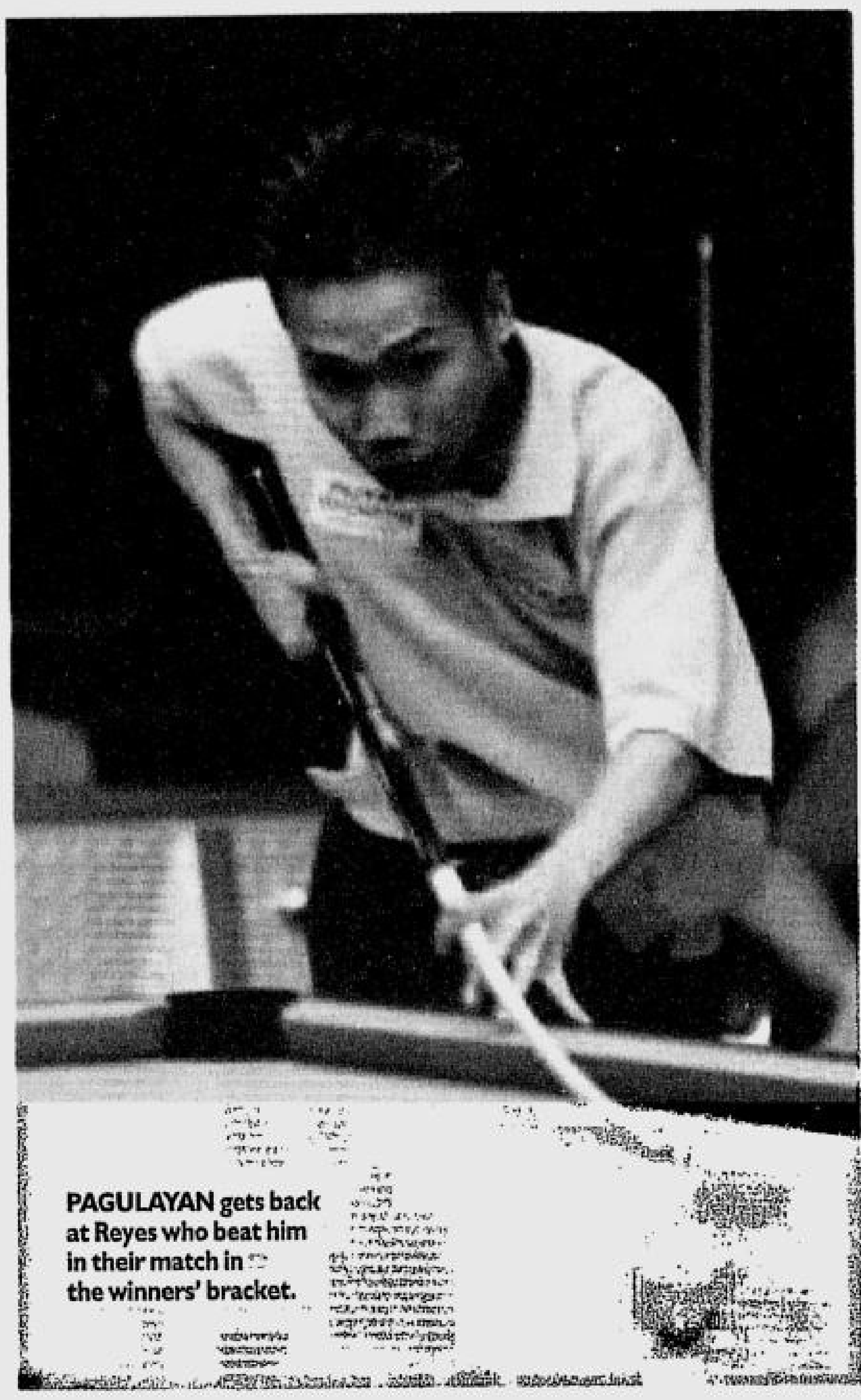
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

SPORTS TV
Compiled by L. Manguiat

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**



PAGULAYAN gets back at Reyes who beat him in their match in the winners' bracket.

WORLD TOUR

Pagulayan nips Bata in Japan finals

ALEX Pagulayan, a Filipino playing out of Canada, subdued homegrown pool wizard Efren "Bata" Reyes, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4, Sunday to rule the 2003 WPA-IBC World Tour Finals in Saitama, Japan.

It was sweet revenge for the Toronto-based Pagulayan, who had earlier lost to Reyes in the fourth game of the winners' bracket of the tournament that featured 32 of the world's top cue masters.

The 25-year-old Pagulayan, runner-up in this year's World Pool Championships in Cardiff, Wales, received $15,000 for his victory, while Reyes, champion of the 2001 edition, won $7,000.

Earlier, Pagulayan nipped Japanese Gou Takami, Az billiards magazine Rookie of the Year Ronnie "Calamba" Alcano and Antonio Lining, before bowing to Reyes.

Pagulayan, however, bounced back with a win against another Japanese, Hiroshi Takenaka, to book his seat in the single-elimination, all-Filipino final four.

There, Pagulayan defeated Antonio Gabica while Reyes ousted Lining, who came from the loser's bracket of the 9-ball tournament. Gabica and Lining netted $4,000 each.

Pagulayan, the reigning Canadian National Open champion, also finished second in the recent Philippines vs Rest of the World match held in Mandaluyong City.

Other Filipinos who competed in the event held at the Skip City venue, just outside Tokyo, were 2002 9-ball champion Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat and Edgardo "Malabon" Acaba. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

GAB to probe Bukidnon boxer's death

THE GAMES and Amusements Board (GAB) will investigate the death of boxer Freddie Gimay, who succumbed a day after being knocked out in a fight in Zamboanga last month.

GAB officer-in-charge Emmanuel Palabrica said the body has already given Gimay's family a P15,000 donation from the Boxers' Welfare Fund.

The inquiry starts on Nov. 13 when the body takes up the preliminary investigation held last Oct. 30 in Cagayan de Oro.

Gimay, from Valencia, Bukidnon, was floored by Rober Gadian in the 8th round of their bout last Oct. 27 in Tetay, Zamboanga.

He lost consciousness after he was counted out and was rushed to a nearby hospital where he eventually slipped into coma.

The boxer died the following day.

Gimay, fighting in the 106-lb category, earned P7,000 per bout, according to Palabrica.

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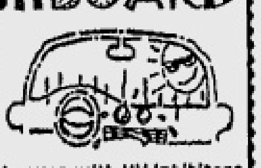

Torre flashes vintage form, still unbeaten

TORRE

ASIA'S first grandmaster Eugene Torre downed Ukrainian GM Alexander Goloshchapov in the fourth round then settled for a draw with Belgian Pieter Claesen in the fifth round Sunday to remain unbeaten in the 15th van Leuven Open chess championship in Leuven, Belgium.

Torre landed in a three-way tie for second place with 4.5 points, half a point behind top seed Russian Super GM Vladimir Epishin, who beat Filipino GMs Bong Villamayor and Joey Antonio in that order for a perfect card.

Tied with Torre were local bet Stephen Berry, whom he will face in the sixth round, and Mihail Golubev.

Antonio, who beat Shanin Mohandesi in the fourth round, was at 4 points in the company of Mohandesi, Pieter Caesen, Giorgi Bagaturov, Frank Wuts, Jeroen Claesen, Yves Duhayon and Eddy Van Espen.

Villamayor got stuck at 3 points after being stunned in the fifth round by little-known Yves Duhayon.

Filipino NM Oliver Barbosa, the country's World Youth under-18 representative, passed Villamayor as he tallied 3.5 points and climbed to a tie for 13th to 25th place.

The Taytay, Rizal, resident drew his fourth round match against Jan Rogers then subdued Patrick Delanoeije in his fifth round match.

In other sixth round pairings, Antonio plays Jeroen Claesen, Barbosa tackles Steven Stinis Humbeek and Villamayor battles Benjamin Tonoli. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Taiwanese netter gains main draw

FIRST leg quarterfinalist Chen Yi of Chinese Taipei beat Yuko Uchida of Japan, 6-3, 7-6 (2), yesterday to enter the main draw of the US$10,000 Union Cement-ITF Women's Circuit 2 at the Manila Polo Club.

Also advancing were South Korean Lyoo Mi, who scored a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Filipino Ivy Krishtel de Castro, and Seo Soon-Mi, who beat fellow Korean Kim Eun-Ha, 6-1, 6-1.

In other matches, American Julianna Gates downed Japanese Aya Oasa, 6-4, 6-4; Elizabeth Alina outplayed German Anja Vanessa Peter, 6-3, 6-3 and Pichittra Thongdach of Thailand defeated Cho Jeong-A of South Korea, 6-0, 6-2.

Asaphil leadership issue far from over

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S hosting of the 10th Asian men's softball championship late this month is in jeopardy with Harry Angping claiming he remains president of the Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines.

In a letter to the Philippine Olympic Committee, Angping said he was not ousted during the election called by supposed disgruntled officers of the Asaphil last Oct. 28 because the voting ended in a 4-4 standoff.

But Asaphil secretary general Filomeno (Boy) Codiñera Jr. disputed Angping's claim of status quo in the presidency, saying the "ousted president" gave misleading facts to POC president Celso Dayrit.

"How did it become 4-4 when only six members of the board of directors showed up in the meeting?" said Codiñera, who was elected to succeed Angping by a 6-0 vote.

Codiñera added that Adamson University, Rizal Technical University, Baguio, Cebu City, Davao City and Zamboanga were represented in the meeting.

Codiñera said his group had decided to oust Angping, a congressman from Manila's third district, for failure to fulfill his promise to boost the development of softball in the country.

Bumgarner clinches karting title

CARMONA, CAVITE—Teenage karter Michelle Bumgarner of M&M Racing wrapped up the Open crown in style last Sunday, ruling the final race of the 2003 Shell Karting Super Series at the Carmona Circuit Philippines here.

For a while, it looked like the Asian Open Karting champion Matteo Guidicelli of Team Cebu-CRG would spoil Bumgarner's day when he ruled the morning heat in this event sanctioned by the Philippine International Karting Association and the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Bridgestone, Nokia, Denso, San Miguel Beer and Eastway Racing.

But the 15-year-old Bumgarner seized the pole in the final heat and never looked back. She crossed the finish line in 16 minutes 53.70 seconds, 4.169 seconds ahead of Guidicelli.

Bumgarner will leave this week for the third and final round of the Asian Zone Karting Championship in Malaysia, where she is favored to cop the title in her division.

Allan Uy of Birel-A3 Motorsport finished third in yesterday's race, with teammate Marlon Stockinger and Michelle's brother, Mark Bumgarner, winding up fourth and fifth, respectively.

It turned out to be a family affair for the Bumgarners as Michelle's father, Lee, ruled the Formula Rotax 125 Expert race and Mark upstaged her with an impressive victory in the Formula Rotax 125 Juniors race.

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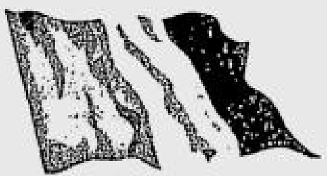

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ALVAREZ

More local aces in PBA draft

By June Navarro

IF YOU are aspiring to play in the Philippine Basketball Association, this is the right time to join the rookie draft.

Only two Fil-foreigners—Richard Peter Benitez and Joachim Gunter Thoss—made it to the pool of aspirants when the league enforced an early deadline for submission of application documents of foreign-born players. The deadline for Fil-fors was Oct. 31.

This development opens a wide door of opportunity for local players, who had to contend with a lot of Fil-fors before making it to the PBA.

Ranidel De Ocampo of St. Francis, Ateneo's Rich Alvarez and Wesley Gonzales and University of the East playmaker Paul Artadi are expected to lead the bumper crop of aspirants when the PBA holds its annual draft on Jan. 16.

James Yap, another UE stalwart, is also expected to be high on the list should the 6-foot-2 sniper join the draft.

The new batch will be made up mostly of players who made names in the UAAP, NCAA and other collegiate leagues.

"We're expecting a rich harvest of new players next year, players who can step in and be an asset not only to the teams but also to the league," said PBA Commissioner Noli Eala.

Welcoat tackles Blu today

WELCOAT and Montaña Pawnshop shoot for their second straight wins when they collide against separate but dangerous rivals as the PBL Platinum Cup visits the newly built San Beda College Gym for the first time in a bid to attract more fans from the University Belt.

Welcoat, which beat newcomer Sunkist-UST, 71-60, in the opener last Saturday at the Pasig Sports Center, tangles with Blu Star Detergent in the nightcap of an interesting doubleheader at 3:45.

Clashing in the first game at 1:45 p.m. are Montaña and Viva Mineral Water-FEU.

Though Welcoat boasts five mainstays of the RP Team, among them deadshot James Yap and Paul Artadi, the Paint Masters can't take the Detergent Kings for granted.

For one, the Detergent Kings are also coming off an 85-80 overtime win over a hardluck ICTSI-La Salle squad last Sunday.

Fiery guard Lou Gatumbato sent the game into extension with a three-point shot with 2 seconds left and Blu Detergent outlasted ICTSI from there.

The 5-foot-10 Gatumbato, who finished with 17 points, is expected to be a marked man, and this may lead to a marquee match-up with Artadi in the season-ending tournament adopting the new slogan: "Ito Ang Tunay na Ligang Pinoy."

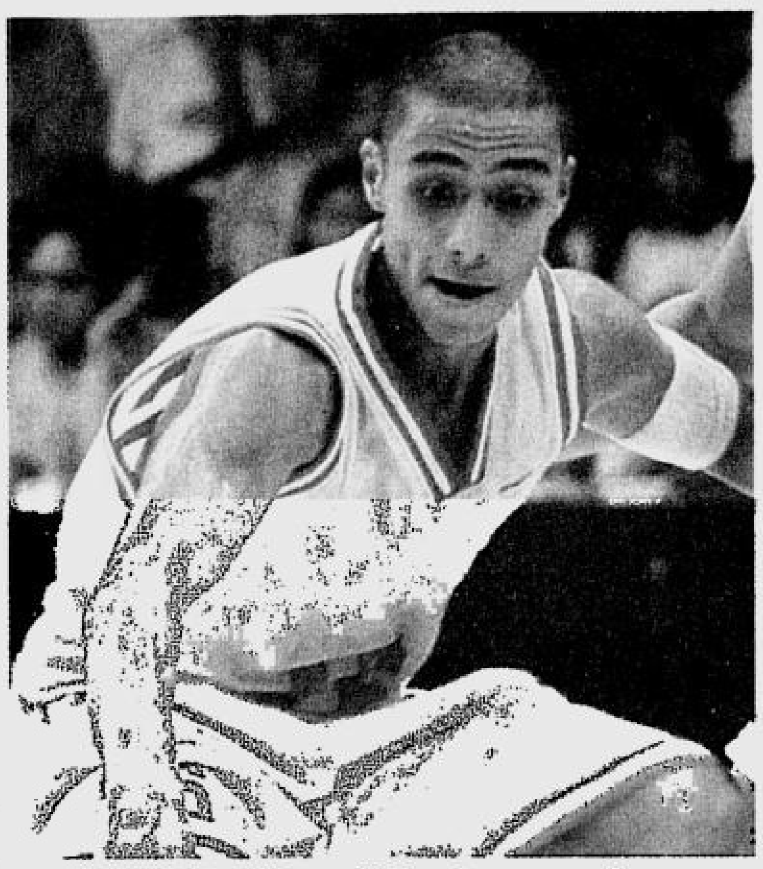
Coach Leo Austria admits he has almost everything at his disposal but wants his star-studded squad to blend well and fast.

"We need to step up because everybody is expecting us to reach the finals but we're not yet playing as one big unit. If we can do that then I'll be happy," said Austria who is out to repeat as champion after a title sweep last year at the expense of Fash Liquid Detergent (formerly Hapee).

The Jewels also shone on opening day as Jondan Salvador and Gary David combined for 29 points to pull the rug from under Fash Liquid Detergent, 70-67.

Pitted against a young and dynamic squad like the Water Force, the Jewels have to work doubly hard and shoot well from the outside to break Viva's sticky defense.

The Water Force lost to the Philippine team, 71-77, also last Sunday, but coach Koy Banal is confident they can bounce back, saying: "We'll try to play better next time and win it."



SPITFIRISH Paul Artadi is one of Welcoat's men to watch.

Dacia stars as Lhuillier five blasts Grachiya

CEBU CITY—Back-to-back titlist M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala-Cebu nailed its second victory in the 2003 Panasonic-National Basketball League Regional Cup tournament last Sunday by blasting newcomer Grachiya-Adamson, 78-60, at the New Cebu City Coliseum here.

Bruce Dacia shot nine of his 24 points in the third quarter to fuel a torrid breakaway that gave the Cebuanos a 56-45 lead going into the final quarter.

Earlier, defending champion Shineway Compak-Ozamiz bounced back fom a tough loss to Lhuillier Saturday by trouncing Spring Cooking Oil-San Pablo, 93-82.

Lhuillier matched Ilocos Sur's 2-0 card, while Ozamiz leveled its record at 1-1.

Spring-San Pablo and Grachiya-Adamson are winless in two games in the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, BJ Star Logistics, Molten, Sulpicio Lines and Nature's Spring.

Melfred Sampilo and Larry Rodriguez, who were held scoreless Saturday, combined for 23 points in the first quarter Sunday to propel Ozamiz to a 32-23 lead which it never lost.

SPORTSWATCH

DLS-Zobel sweeps elementary division

DE La Salle-Zobel won twice last weekend to sweep its five elementary division assignments in the ongoing Milo BEST Women's Basketball League (WBL) at the St. Benedict College courts. The DLSZ girls trimmed Miriam College, 33-28, last Saturday and then downed St. Scholastica's College, 38-28, the next day. Miriam College also posted two big victories to clinch a slot in the college division quarterfinals on a 6-0 card. Miriam shocked defending champion University of Santo Tomas, 54-52, and then crushed St. Scholastica, 51-29. The other results: Elementary—Miriam d. Poveda, 46-30; and Community of Learners d. JASMS, 51-5. High School (competitive)—Miriam d. DLSZ, 50-39, and St. Anthony, 56-25; Assumption d. St. Anthony, 56-33, and Poveda, 66-28; St. Scholastica's d. Poveda, 61-34; St. Benedict d. JASMS, 4-37; and DLSZ d. St. Scholastica, 68-53. High School (developmental)—St. Mary's (Caloocan) d. PSHS, 29-2; St. Theresa's College d. St. Benedict, 57-23; De La Salle-Lipa d. Montessori Integrated School, 33-17; O.B. Montesori d. Community of Learners, 33-32; New Era University d. Holy Spirit, 50-40; and UPIS d. Miriam, 25-15. College—PNU d. Ateneo, 37-34; University of Asia-Pacific d. UE, 46-20; UST d. Ateneo, 47-26; and UE d. Assumption, 35-30.

Community High booters blank foes

MASBATE—Masbate National Community High School blanked Cataingan High, 3-0, last Sunday to win the Masbate Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football title at the local sports complex. Romy Villariz, John Eschuriaga and Gringo Bravo struck in the fifth, 13th and 15th minutes, respectively, to propel Masbate to victory. Masbate crushed Dimasalang High, 8-0, while Cataingan whipped MNCHS' team C, 5-0, to advance to the finals.

Lesser lights shine in Pasig Open kegfest

THE LESSER lights took the spotlight from members of the national team last Sunday with big games in the 23rd Pasig Bowling Association Open Tenpin Bowling Championships at the Green Valley Country Club in Pasig City. Arnold Lecaros, Diego Candano, Eve Lombos, Jack Interia, Abbie Gan, Roland Salariosa, Joy Uy, Jose Catalasan and Roger Laraya rolled big games in the tournament supported by Sen. Robert Barbers, Rep. Chuck Mathay III and Boysen Paints. Lecaros carded 2158 to pace the men's Class O all events while Interia led the men's Class A with 2098 and Lombos the ladies side with 1857. Catalasan scored 2056 and Uy toppled 1816 to pace the men's and ladies' Class B, respectively.

Pagcor firms up support for cycling

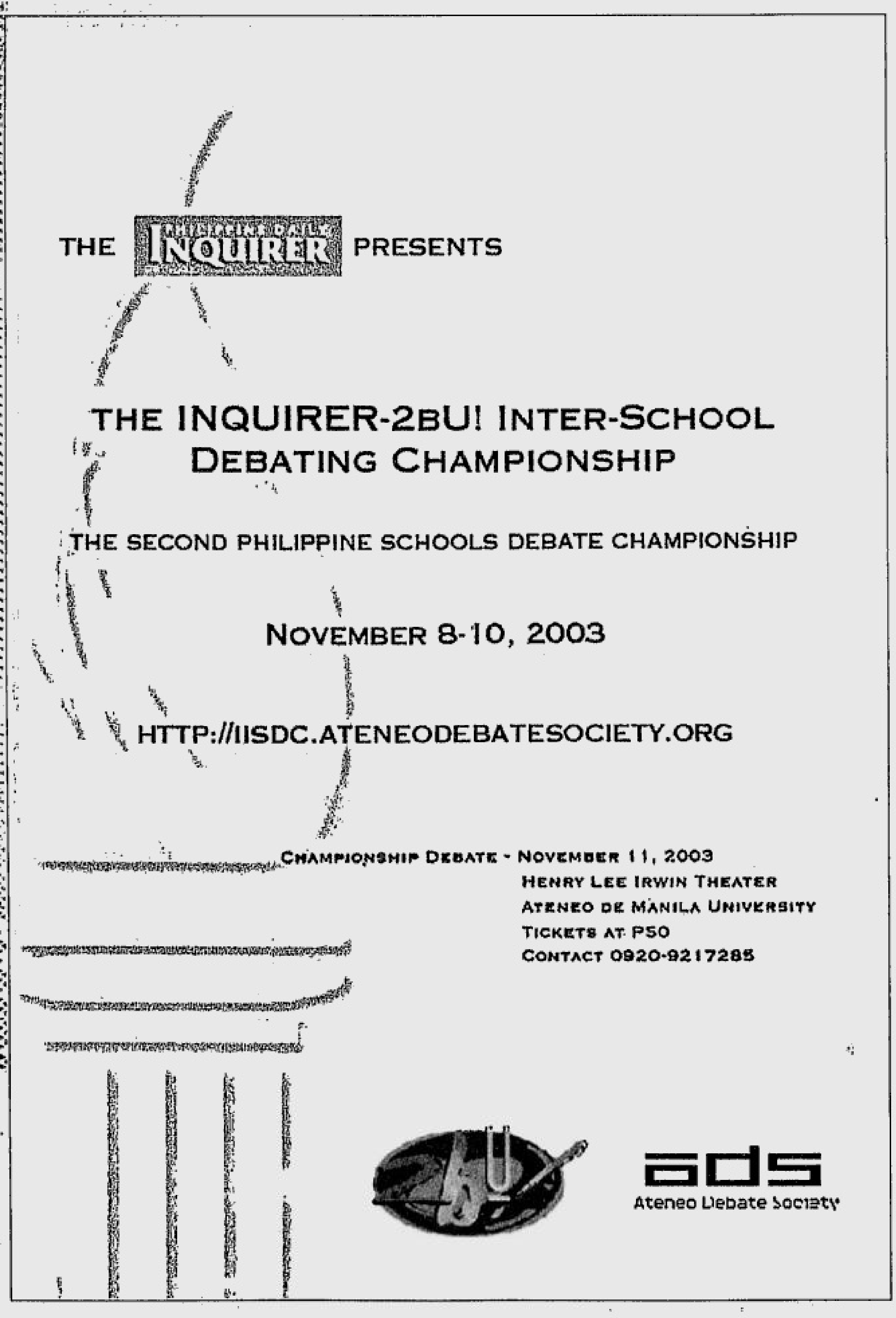
PAGCORSPORTS' stunning 1-2 finish in the Metro Manila Special Race of the Tour Pilipinas last Sunday boosted the government agency's efforts in sports development, according to team manager Louie Carlos. "It goes to show that Pagcor's support for cycling, and Philippine sports for that matter, is all-out," said Carlos. He said Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino has been monitoring the progress of the team, which vied in the 2003 Tour Pilipinas that cycling czar Bert Lina, through his company Air21, revived after a four-year hiatus last summer. Lucien Lloyd Reynante, son of two-time Tour champion Manuel, and Rhyan Tanguilig completed an impressive breakaway to cross the Marikina Sports Park finish first and second.

LGBA derby features 50 quality fights

DERBY fans are assured of 50 quality fights as Luzon's top breeders clash anew in today's 3-stag eliminations. third leg of the Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association 7-Stag Derby at the Roligon Mega Cockpit beginning at 6 p.m. The finale is on Thursday. Sponsors are Washout Shampoo, Pitfighter Feeds, Enertone, Derby Ace, Amtyl 500, Supremo Pellets and Strike Power Pellets. Meanwhile, the "Apordabol Na, Incredibol Pa 5-Cock Derby" of top promoter Rolly Ligon has been reset to Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 11 and 13. At stake is P2.25 million and an imported Nissan Serena for the fastest kill champ. The entry fee is P8,800. A participant may field an entry during the two-cock elimination rounds. Qualifiers advance to the championship round on Dec. 13. "The same format will be followed," Ligon said. For inquiries, call 833-2275 and 833-1638.

Estabillo mom passes away at 96

GAVINA G. Estabillo, mother of former Journal editor and now Philippine Airlines executive Rollie Estabillo, died last Nov. 7. She is 96. She left behind Rollie, sisters Rosie, Charing and Nene, daughter-in-law Tessie, and grandchildren Matthew, Lawrence, Marco and Amerin. Her remains lie at Funeraria Paz along Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment is tentatively set on Nov. 12.



THE INQUIRER PRESENTS

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NOVEMBER 8-10, 2003

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Ateneo Debate Society

Bastardizing the sweet science

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IT was a Sunday you would rather perish in your thoughts than relish in the days to come. For, if you saw the fight on TV, you would have wished you had switched channels before the bout began. It was a fight so dull even an insomniac would have fallen asleep watching it.

Some people will surely disagree but I'll say it just the same: Roy Jones Jr. fought scared. Which was a shame because he is supposed to be the best of the best.

But wait, he fought wisely.

Hello?

Not throwing enough punches was wise fighting?

Backing up most of the time was playing it smart?

I wasn't born yesterday, fellas.

What I know is, boxing is fighting. When a boxer elects more to duck than unleash punches, he'd better switch to marriage counseling. Too many husbands these days get hit by flying saucers, not knowing how to duck when the wife is in a foul mood.

It would have been all right had Roy Jones Jr. not been a world-class fighter. A cut above the rest, so to speak. But he is, and that makes matters worse for, with the way he fought on this particularly sunny Sunday, it would seem he was more content with pleasing himself than his audience.

Will somebody please bring back the Robinsons, the Alis, the Leonards?

They'd all please us, not just momentarily but all the way, the genuine way. They never bastardized the sweet science, the way Roy Jones Jr. did on Sunday.

Never mind Antonio Tarver. To begin with, he was the underdog. And while at this, it does not surprise me anymore that champions these days are easily billed underdogs. When I was younger, virtually all champions trying to defend their crowns had been favored to win.

Tarver, defending his light-heavyweight world title, was the 8-1 underdog. Can you believe that?

It sucks because they give no respect anymore to champs.

It sucks because Tarver's record of 21-1, with 17 knockouts, was never seemingly considered at all.

It sucks because the odds never reflected the outcome of the fight. Jones, the winner, could not even open a cut on Tarver's face.

But then, even as Tarver lost for only the second time in 23 fights, I'd say he ought to be proud. With his majority decision defeat, Tarver could still continue to honestly feel he had won it. He was even euphoric right after the fight ended.

To begin with, emerging minus even a mouse beneath his eyes, Tarver appeared unhurt. In contrast, Jones got tagged with jarring shots in the seventh and eighth rounds. The few times they engaged toe-to-toe, Jones looked frightened and would clinch as hard as he could obviously to avoid Tarver's shots. At one point, Jones got pushed to the ropes while Tarver was trying to disengage from a clinch.

There's no question Roy Jones Jr. is the world's smartest fighter today. But of what use will that trait be if it pisses off more than it pleases the audience? Jones deserves the boos he got.

So move it, buddy. Give me that remote control. There's something cooking at Solar Sports.

***

FASTBREAK. The first is last and last is first. That's from the Good Book. For me, Sol Juvida fits that to a T. Thus this: The UP-Diliman professor of literature delivered one of the most moving eulogies during the "Parangal Kay Domeng" last week. They go a long way. When Domeng (a.k.a. Dominador B. Mirasol, may his soul rest in peace) learned that Sol J, poet-fictionist-playwright-essayist, wrote "Nanay Andal," the venerated novelist was pleasantly stunned. As a Palanca Literary Awards judge at that time, Domeng had picked "Nanay Andal" first prize in the essay category. So enamored was Domeng with Sol J's "Nanay Andal" that he made Sol J the godmother of her daughter, Adora. "Nanay Andal" is the story of a dirt-poor woman imprisoned for trumped-up charges. Adora is now a 16-year-old beauty, who is showing signs she'd follow in the literary footsteps of her departed father.

Ex-RP champ wins USBA crown

FORMER Philippine titlist Vernie Torres shared the limelight with his manager, Roy Jones Jr., by posting a unanimous decision victory over Puerto Rican Miguel del Valle to win the United States Boxing Association junior bantamweight championship at the Mandalay Bay Activity Center in Las Vegas, Nevada, Sunday.

The 29-year-old Davaoeño, who has been under Jones' guidance since July 1999, posted impressive 117-111, 118-110, 119-109 scores in the 12-round bout which served as an appetizer to WBC and WBA light heavyweight title clash won by Jones with an unpopular majority decision over Antonio Tarver.

Rey Danseco, contributor

Artest keys Pacers' win over 76ers

NEW YORK—Ron Artest controlled his temper after losing a tooth following a hard collision with Derrick Coleman, and then coolly sank a pair of free throws.

One of the NBA's most excitable players is behaving himself these days, and the Indiana Pacers are reaping the benefits.

"Tonight is an indication of the new and improved Ron," teammate Reggie Miller said.

Artest scored 30 points and had 10 rebounds to lead the Pacers to their fifth straight win, an 85-74 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Sunday night.

"I'm just having fun," Artest said.

Artest led the league in flagrant-foul points last season and missed 12 games because of suspensions. This year, Artest has had no flagrants called on him—so far.

"A couple of things were blown out of proportion," Artest said. "I'm just here to play basketball."

In other games, it was: Detroit 98, New Jersey 84; Atlanta 91, Seattle 81; Boston 91, Sacramento 82; and Toronto 89, Denver 76.

The Pacers are 4-0 in road games, their best start in the NBA. The 1971-72 Pacers started that ABA season 7-0 away from home.

Late in the fourth, Artest drove down the baseline from the left side with his left arm fully extended when Coleman collided with him under the basket.

Artest crashed to the floor, holding his face and was down for a few minutes. He lost a tooth and had a swollen lip but instead of retaliating against Coleman, Artest made two free throws for a 71-66 lead.

Later, he hit another 3-pointer for an 80-70 lead and the Pacers cruised from there.

Allen Iverson scored 37 points for the Sixers on 15-for-30 shooting, but had little offensive help. AP

- SOLAR Sports will telecast the Cleveland Cavaliers-New York Knicks game "live" at 8 a.m. today, with a replay at 8 p.m.

MAURESMO celebrates her 6-7, 6-3, 3-6 triumph over Henin-Hardenne. REUTERS

Mauresmo prevents all-Belgian showdown

LOS ANGELES—Kim Clijsters of Belgium rallied from a set down and a 3-2 deficit in the second to beat an injured American Jennifer Capriati, 4-6, 6-3, 6-0, in a semifinal match at the WTA Championships.

Clijsters won the final 10 games in advancing to Monday night's final for the second straight year. The winner receives $1,000,030, the biggest paycheck in women's tennis. The extra $30 represents the WTA Tour's 30th anniversary.

Clijsters will play fourth-seeded Amelie Mauresmo of France, who upset No. 2 seed Justine Henin-Hardenne of Belgium, 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-3, on Sunday. Mauresmo spoiled an all-Belgian final between Clijsters, the outgoing No. 1 player, and Henin-Hardenne, who will succeed her countrywoman when the year's final rankings are released Tuesday.

Mauresmo needed help reaching the semifinals. Elena Dementieva of Russia upset American Chanda Rubin Saturday. *AP*

UP netter leads qualifiers

UNIVERSITY of the Philippines netter Jeremiah Sison swamped Eric Sandoval, 8-1, while Michael Tenorio edged Arnel dela Cruz, 8-7 (1), yesterday to lead the winners in the first round qualifying of the P400,000 Philippine Columbian Association Open Tennis Championships at the PCA outdoors courts in Plaza Dilao, Paco.

Other winners were Jonathan Juan over Rex Deato, 8-7 (1); Art Thomas Calingasan over Auloe Etcobanez, 8-1; Nathaniel Guadayo over Alexander Coyuito, 8-0; Jordan Espina over Neil Duroi, 8-1; Nante de Castro over Marco Lua, 8-1; Peter Loyola over Junjun Villanueva, 8-2; Juvan Divinagracia over Graciano Lapore, 8-2; Iñigo Caguiron over Danilo Olosis, 8-1; Ramil Buenaventura over Giovani Morante, 8-2; and William Murrell over Jojo Urbiztondo, 8-0.

The qualifying will run until Friday while the main draw will start on Saturday.

Record victory by Campbell

HOUSTON—Chad Campbell became the first player to make the Tour Championship his first victory, closing with a 3-under 68 on Sunday to break a tournament scoring record in the PGA Tour's version of the All-Star game.

"It was what I was looking for all year," said Campbell, who was a runner-up three times this year, including at the PGA Championship.

Campbell finished at 16-under 268—the lowest score in relation to par in the 17-year history of the Tour Championship—to win by three shots over Charles Howell III.

Howell had a 70, ending his streak of seven rounds in the 60s at the Tour Championship. A year ago, he was in the 60s all four days at East Lake and finished second to Vijay Singh.

Retief Goosen had a 69 and was at 272, while Chris Riley—Campbell's roommate at UNLV—had a 70 to finish fourth.

Campbell wasn't the only winner Sunday.

Singh closed with a 68 to tie for fifth and easily won the PGA Tour money title, ending Tiger Woods' four-year reign.

Woods won the points-based PGA of America Player of the Year award and the Vardon Trophy for having the lowest scoring average. He has won both awards five years in a row.

Woods also broke one of the oldest records in golf by making the cut for the 114th consecutive tournament. Byron Nelson finished in the money 113 times in a row in the 1940s.

Woods needed a victory for a record fifth straight money title. But his putter failed him throughout the week at Champions Golf Club and he closed with a 74 to finish 26th in the 31-man field of top money winners. *AP*

Woods claims record 5th Player of the Year

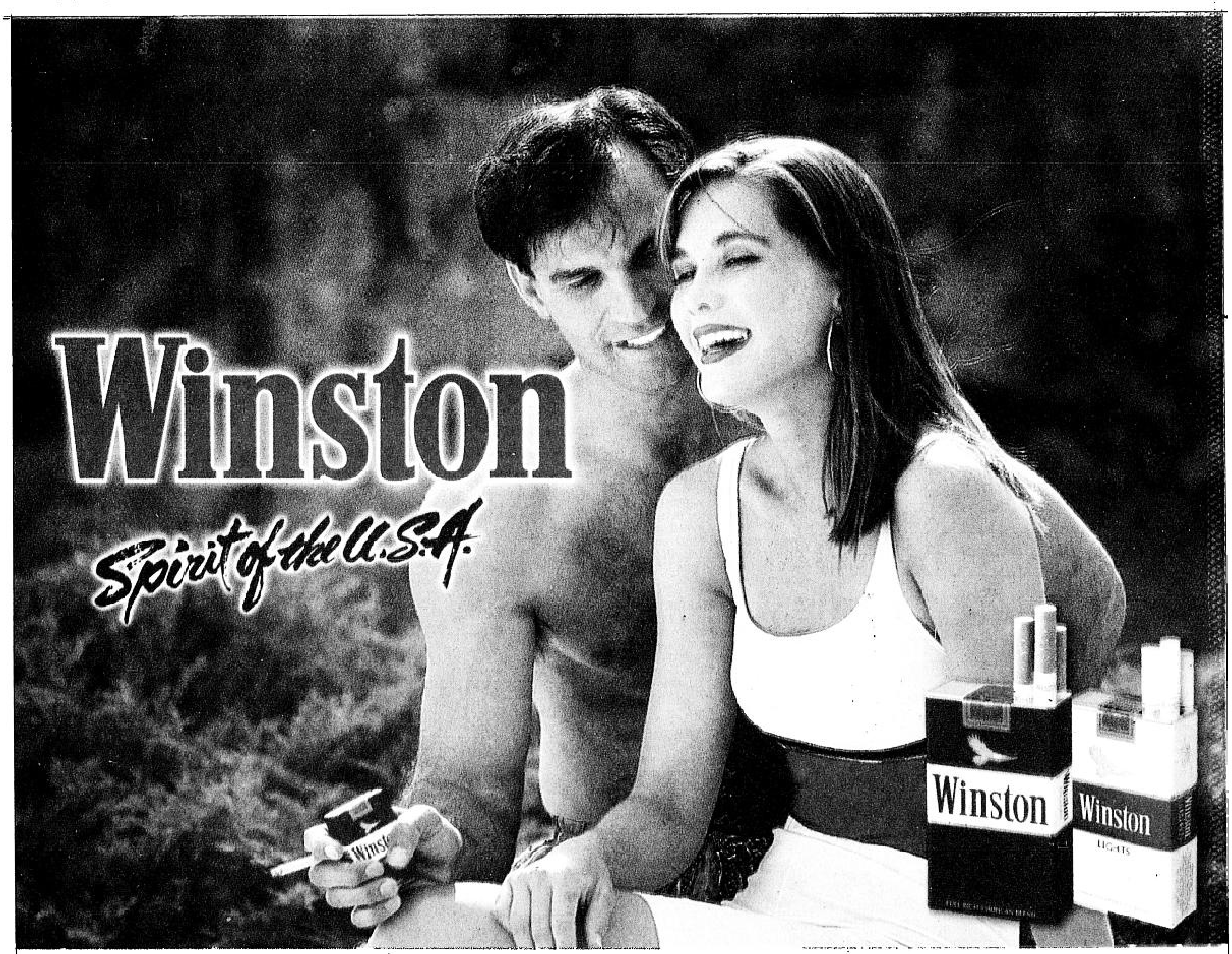
HOUSTON—Tiger Woods won the PGA of America Player of the Year award for a record fifth consecutive year, and became the first player to win the Vardon Trophy five straight times for having the lowest adjusted scoring average.

Vijay Singh won his first PGA Tour money title Sunday, ending Woods' four-year run, with the second-highest total in history at just over $7.5 million.

Those were the only awards decided after the Tour Championship, the final tournament of the PGA Tour season.

Left undecided was the PGA Tour player of the year, a vote of the players that likely will come down to Woods, Singh and Mike Weir.

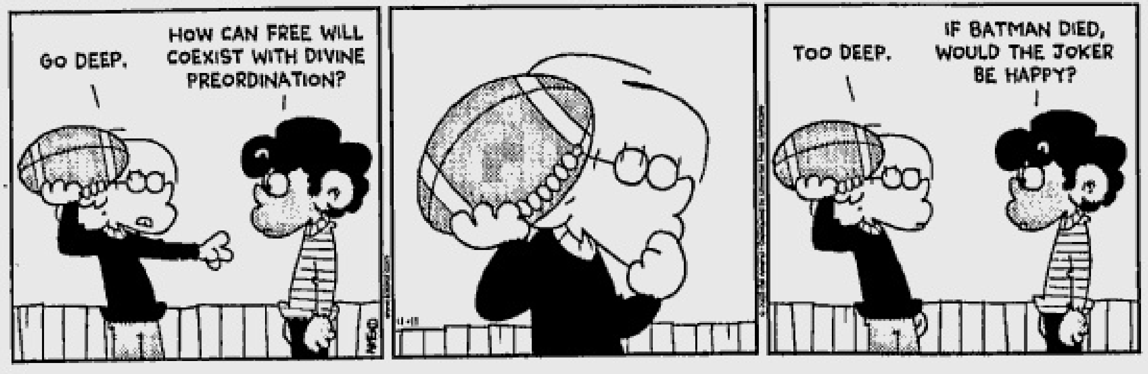
Woods now is tied with Tom Watson at six PGA of America Player of the Year awards. It is based on points for victories, and a sliding scale for position on the money list and the Vardon Trophy standings. *AP*



Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

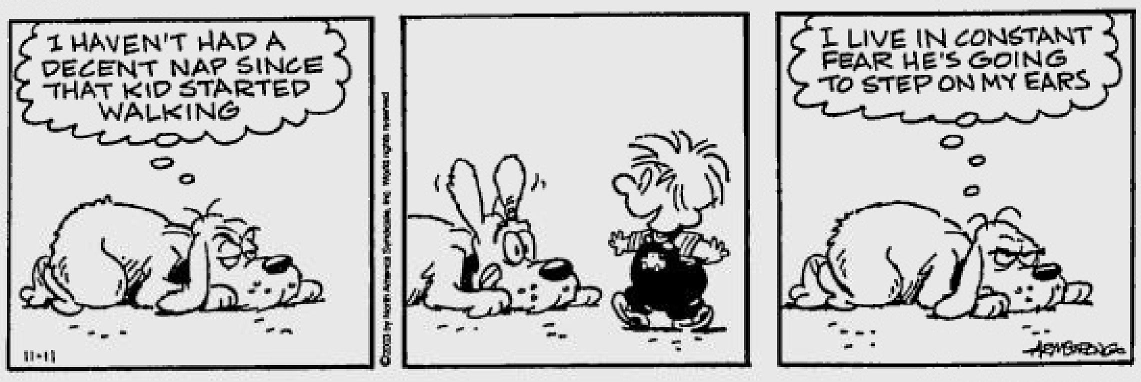
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


GO DEEP.
HOW CAN FREE WILL COEXIST WITH DIVINE PREORDINATION?
TOO DEEP.
IF BATMAN DIED, WOULD THE JOKER BE HAPPY?

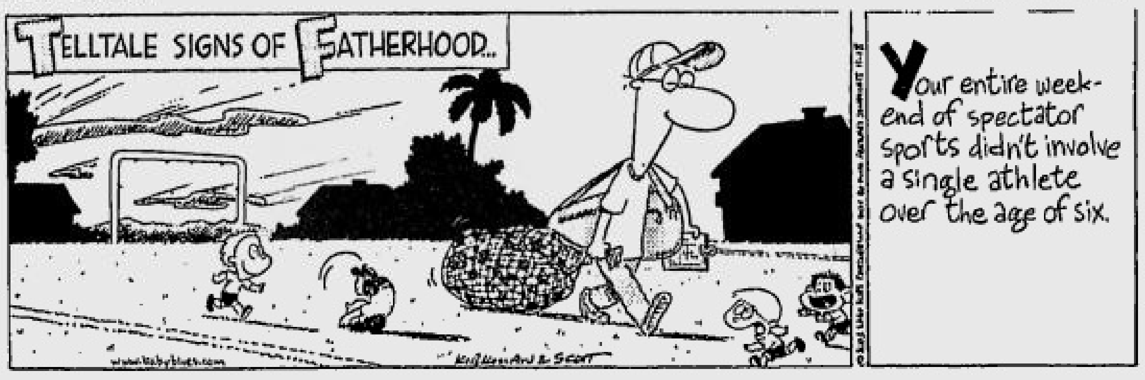
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I HAVEN'T HAD A DECENT NAP SINCE THAT KID STARTED WALKING
I LIVE IN CONSTANT FEAR HE'S GOING TO STEP ON MY EARS

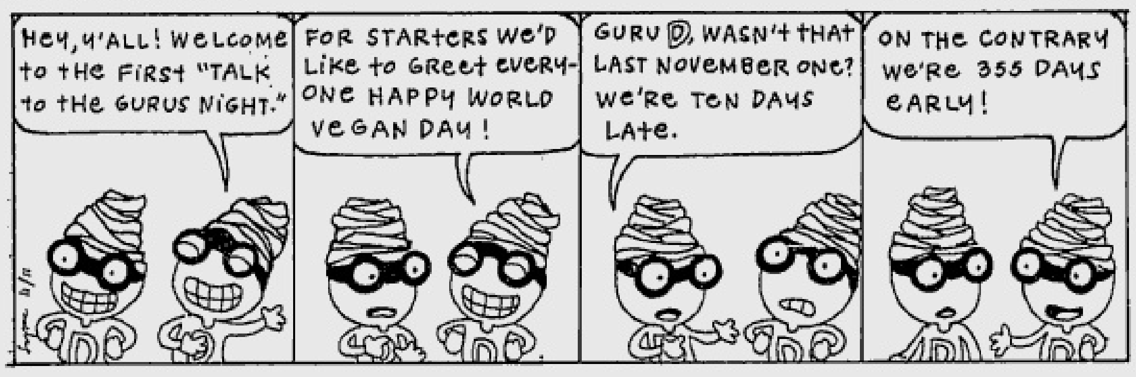
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


TELLTALE SIGNS OF FATHERHOOD..
Your entire week-end of spectator sports didn't involve a single athlete over the age of six.
www.babyblues.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, Y'ALL! WELCOME TO THE FIRST "TALK TO THE GURUS NIGHT."
FOR STARTERS WE'D LIKE TO GREET EVERYONE HAPPY WORLD VEGAN DAY!
GURU D, WASN'T THAT LAST NOVEMBER ONE? WE'RE TEN DAYS LATE.
ON THE CONTRARY WE'RE 355 DAYS EARLY!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are complex. There is far more to you than meets the eye. Externally cheerful and easy-going, privately you are passionate—even turbulent. You guard your privacy. Ironically, you exude an aura that magnetizes others to you. You are protective of family. The year ahead is one of new beginnings and fresh starts.

Birthdate of: Demi Moore, actress; Leonardo DiCaprio, actor; Kurt Vonnegut, writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Others will definitely surprise you today. It could be something they say; it could be something they do. Either way, expect a little spice in your day.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Wild, sudden ideas might hit you today about shared holdings and joint property. Sleep on this and give it all a sober second thought. You might change your mind tomorrow.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a bit of a nerve-wracking day. Others are completely unpredictable. Conversations with people will throw you for a loop. (Buckle your seat belt.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The tempo at work today is brisk! Everybody's running around with an outboard motor on their butt. Be prepared to jump out of the way. You can't stand still too long.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Leo parents have to be extra vigilant with children today. This is an accident-prone day. Avoid rash, impulsive judgments and actions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): A family member will surprise you today. Discussions about domestic issues do not flow smoothly. People are independent; they want their own way. There's nothing you can do about it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're fascinated by everything today. Not only that—you're eager for more, because your mind is stimulated and buzzing. Thoughts are flashing through your mind like lightning.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be cautious about impulse buying today. You're tempted to buy something the minute you see it. Watch out for this knee-jerk reaction. After all, we're talking about your hard-earned money.

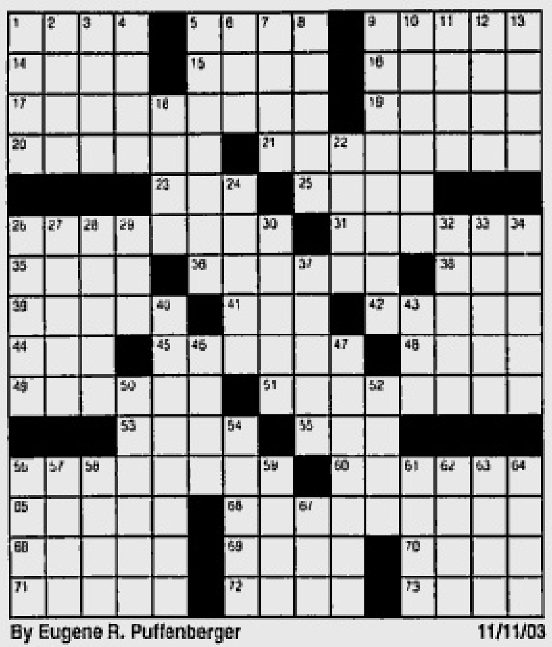
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your mind is going in so many directions at once, you might overlook important details. Nevertheless, your thinking is creative and outside the box.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel pleasantly inspired about something today. It feels like a brilliant idea. Actually, you are advised to wait until tomorrow to look at this idea again.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You get bored easily today. You want excitement and stimulation! That's why the plans you originally made today will probably not work out at all. Stay on your toes.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be careful when talking to bosses, because you're inclined to base your opinions today on sudden, impulsive ideas. It's all gut-reaction thinking. Sometimes this works; sometimes it doesn't. Who knows which is the case today?

DAILY CROSSWORD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49 50 51 52
53 54 55
56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64
65 66 67
68 69 70
71 72 73

By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX

11/11/03

ACROSS

1 Woe is me!
5 Determine weight by lifting
9 Airhead
14 Soft drink
15 Culture medium
16 Luigi's island
17 Card game
19 Fence openings
20 Teeter-totter
21 Social butterfly
23 Arrest
25 Thin coin
26 Card game
31 Nastiest
35 Earthenware crock
36 Stone fruits
38 Innovative
39 Rodeo accessory
41 Male sib
42 Sip
44 Annapolis grad
45 Flintlock muskets
48 Stringed instrument
49 Disarm a bull
51 Card game
53 Await
55 Aries
56 Shade of gray
60 Creature comfort
65 Gospels' source material
66 Card game
68 Pale
69 Border lake
70 Square measure
71 Stops suckling
72 Market
73 __-do-well

DOWN

1 Does something
2 Rob of "St. Elmo's Fire"
3 Toward shelter
4 Without: Fr.
5 Actress Susan
6 Self
7 Long tooth
8 Step
9 Criminal groom
10 Chilean writer Allende
11 Lorre in eight films
12 Cordon __ (master chef)
13 Tobacco kiln
18 Kenyan river
22 Gainer or jack-knife
24 Pointed remarks
26 World-weary
27 Skirt style
28 Butt heads
29 Hip dude
30 City on the Po
32 Follow as a consequence
33 Tussle
34 Poetic contraction
37 Of the Arctic
40 Kenyans and Egyptians
43 "__ in the Family"
46 PC command
47 Cocker __
50 Conan or Pat
52 Leave out
54 Lets up
56 Hammer feature
57 Stockings
58 Turkish title
59 Traditional wisdom
61 "Thief" star James
62 Yeats' country
63 Christmas decoration
64 Century fraction
67 Al Capp's "__ Abner"

Monday's Puzzle Solved

O	N	T	A	P	■	I	S	M	S	■	H	O	P	I
T	O	W	N	S	■	W	H	O	A	■	U	L	A	N
H	O	I	T	Y	T	O	I	T	Y	■	R	A	N	K
E	N	R	I	C	H	■	R	E	S	O	L	V	E	S
R	E	L	■	H	O	U	R	■	S	H	Y	■	■	■
■	■	■	H	E	R	B	■	W	O	M	B	A	T	S
A	R	G	O	■	N	O	P	E	■	S	U	S	H	I
S	O	A	K	■	Y	A	L	I	E	■	R	E	E	L
A	L	L	E	N	■	T	O	R	N	■	L	A	N	K
P	L	A	Y	E	R	S	■	D	E	W	Y	■	■	■
■	■	■	P	R	E	■	F	O	R	E	■	B	A	R
C	A	B	O	O	D	L	E	■	G	A	L	O	R	E
A	M	O	K	■	H	A	N	K	Y	P	A	N	K	Y
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E	D	G	Y	■	T	E	E	N	■	N	E	O	N	S

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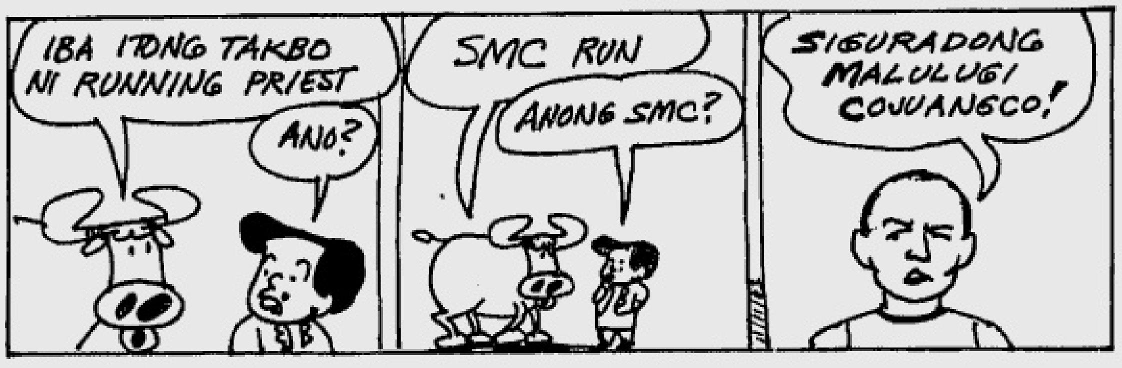
11/11/03

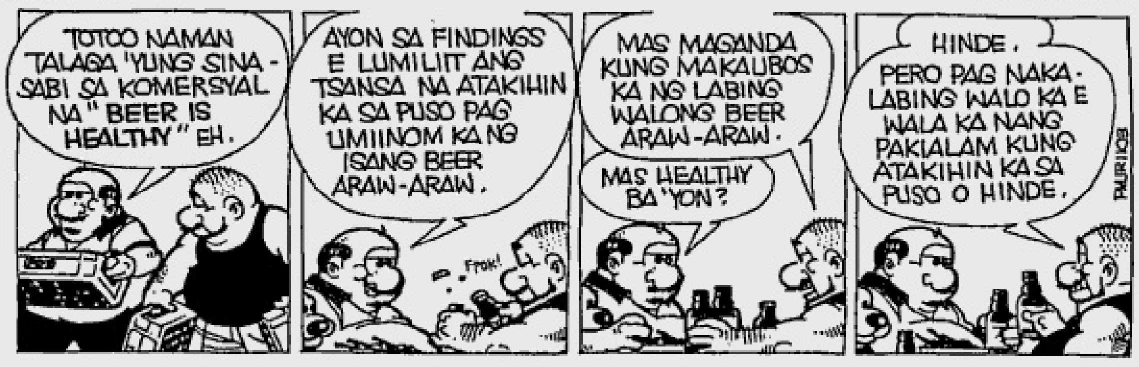
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


IBA ITONG TAKBO NI RUNNING PRIEST
ANO?
SMC RUN
ANONG SMC?
SIGURADONG MALULUGI COJUANGCO!

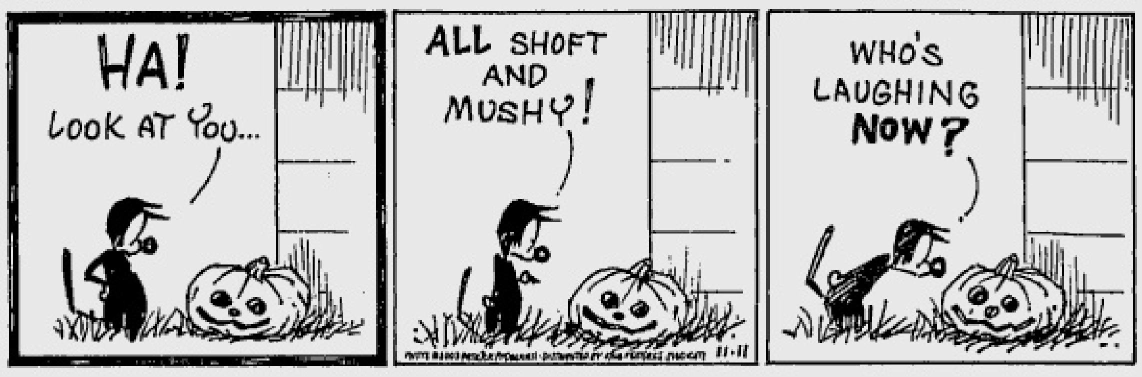
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TOTOO NAMAN TALAGA 'YUNG SINA-SABI SA KOMERSYAL NA "BEER IS HEALTHY" EH.
AYON SA FINDINGS E LUMILIIT ANG TSANSA NA ATAKIHIN KA SA PUSO PAG UMIINOM KA NG ISANG BEER ARAW-ARAW.
FROK!
MAS MAGANDA KUNG MAKAUBOS KA NG LABING WALONG BEER ARAW-ARAW.
MAS HEALTHY BA 'YON?
HINDE. PERO PAG NAKA-LABING WALO KA E WALA KA NANG PAKIALAM KUNG ATAKIHIN KA SA PUSO O HINDE.
PURICO3

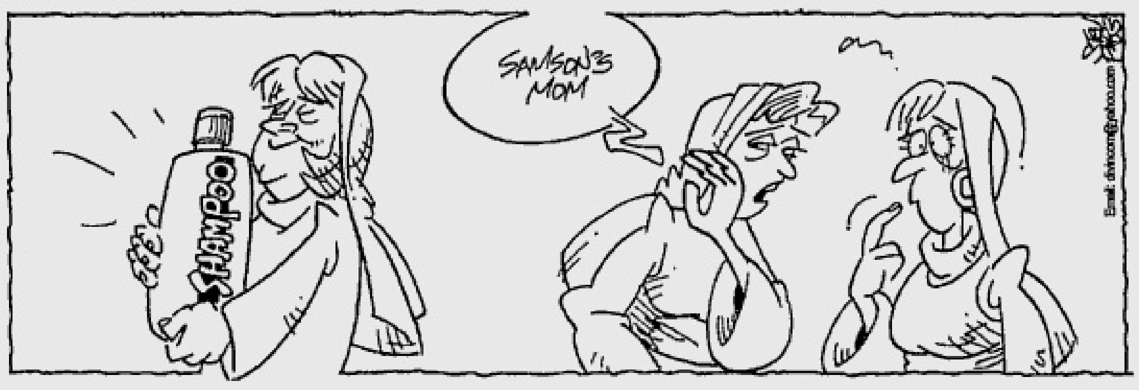
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HA! LOOK AT YOU...
ALL SHOFT AND MUSHY!
WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

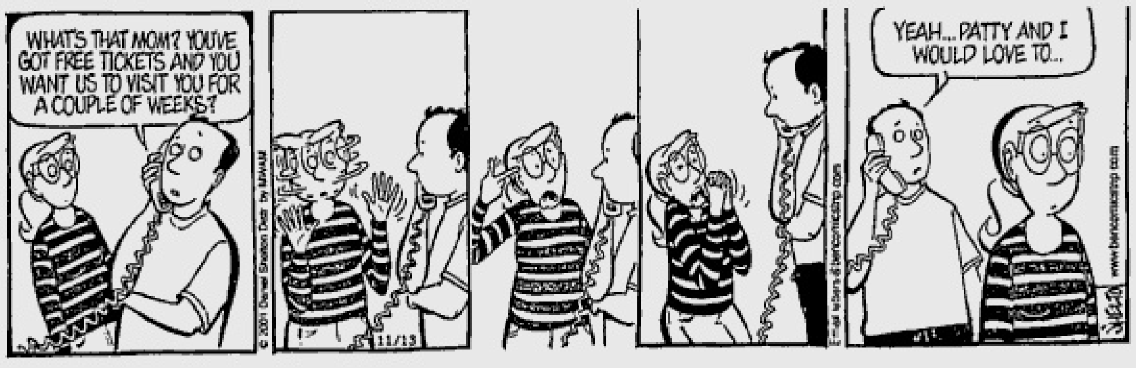
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SHAMPOO
SAMSON'S MOM

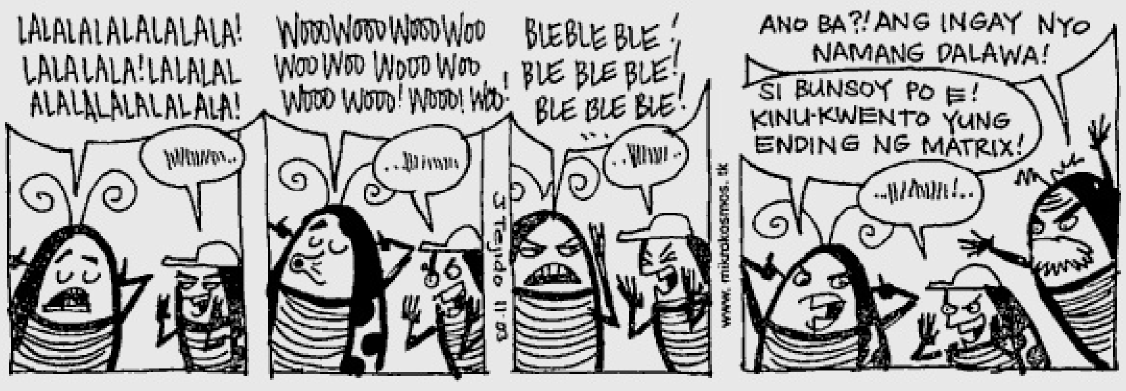
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT'S THAT MOM? YOU'VE GOT FREE TICKETS AND YOU WANT US TO VISIT YOU FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS?
YEAH... PATTY AND I WOULD LOVE TO...

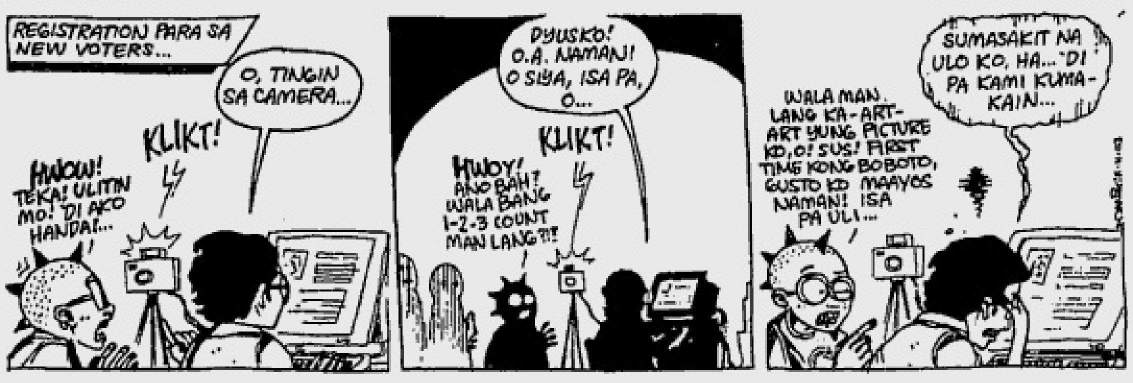
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


LALALALALALALALA! LALALALA! LALALAL ALALALALALALALA!
WOOD WOOD WOOD WOO WOO WOO WOOD WOO WOOD WOOD! WOOD! WOO!
BLE BLE BLE! BLE BLE BLE! BLE BLE BLE!
ANO BA?! ANG INGAY NYO NAMANG DALAWA!
SI BUNSOY PO E! KINU-KWENTO YUNG ENDING NG MATRIX!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

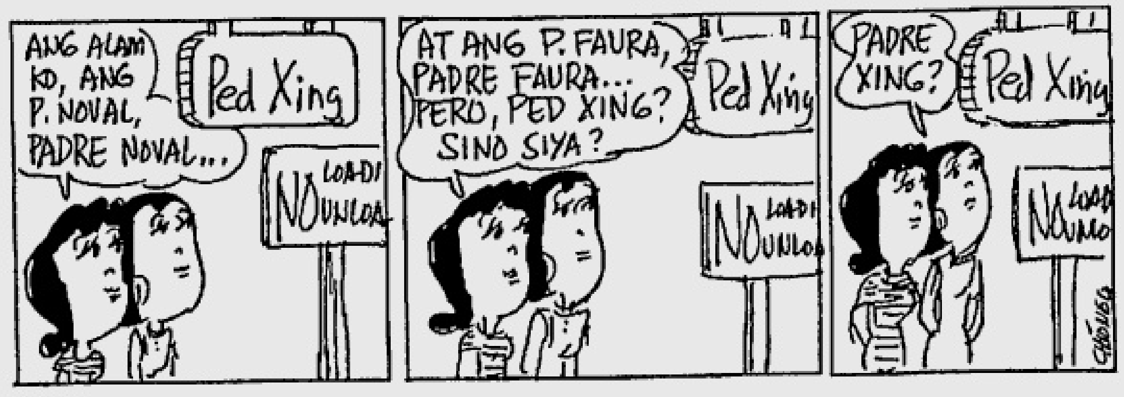
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


REGISTRATION PARA SA NEW VOTERS...
O, TINGIN SA CAMERA...
KLIKT!
HWOW! TEKA! ULITIN MO! 'DI AKO HANDA!...
DYUSKO! O.A. NAMAN! O SIYA, ISA PA, O...
KLIKT!
HWOY! ANO BAH? WALA BANG 1-2-3 COUNT MAN LANG?!!
WALA MAN LANG KA-ART-ART YUNG PICTURE KO, O! SUS! FIRST TIME KONG BOBOTO, GUSTO KO MAAYOS NAMAN! ISA PA ULI...
SUMASAKIT NA ULO KO, HA... 'DI PA KAMI KUMA-KAIN...

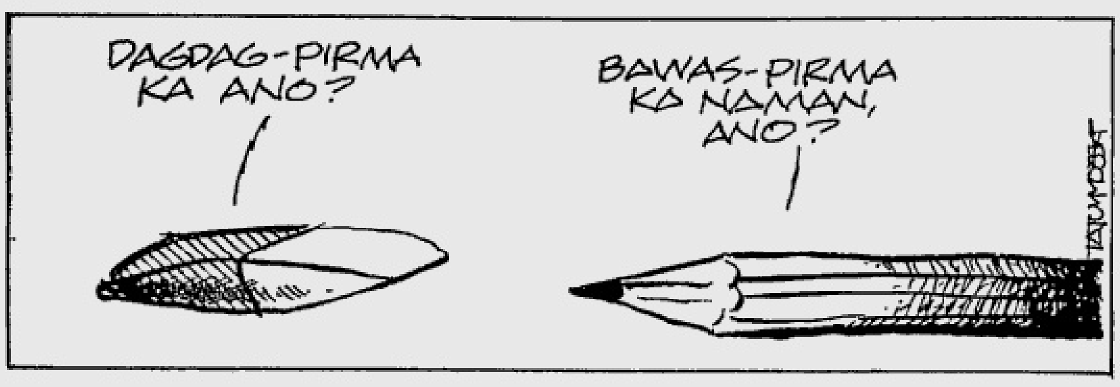
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG ALAM KO, ANG P. NOVAL, PADRE NOVAL...
Ped Xing
NO LOADING UNLOADING
AT ANG P. FAURA, PADRE FAURA... PERO, PED XING? SINO SIYA?
PADRE XING?

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DAGDAG-PIRMA KA ANO?
BAWAS-PIRMA KA NAMAN, ANO?

'Judav is not pregnant with Robin's baby'

From page A26

in a relationship before they spread rumors that she is carrying Robin's child.

"I don't know where they got these stories," he said. "They should get their facts straight. They speak of different dates and different places."

Judy Ann, according to Alfie, is not the type who would fall for a married man. "Why would she fall for Robin, who treats her like his own sister?" he said. "He even calls her '*tol*' (short for *utol*, slang for brother).

Last Sunday on "The Buzz" on ABS-CBN, Robin read a letter in Filipino, addressed to his fans and loved ones, saying he was leaving the telenovela to go to Australia to be with his wife and three children.

"I'm tied to Channel 2 for eight months but I'm leaving next month to be with my family," Robin, visibly shaken, said in Filipino. "I'm willing to work for Channel 2 for four months when I get back."

He said he would discuss with the director and the scriptwriter of "Basta't Kasama Kita" the changes that would be made in the telenovela.

"There's a time for everything," he said. "My family is the most important thing to me. I know my wife still loves me. I hope she could give me another chance."

Patricia's 'Secrets'

SEXY star Patricia Javier will perform in "Secrets of Kamasutra" at Air Force One in Parañaque City tomorrow night, Nov. 12, and on Nov. 19.

The show was described as a "titillating concert."

Patricia started in show biz as a member of German Moreno's "That's Entertainment." She won wide attention, however, when she played a sexy role in the movie "Ang Kabit ni Mrs. Montero," with Edu Manzano and Sunshine Cruz.

For inquiries on "Secrets," call 820-7273.

Air Force One is at 888 Ninoy Aquino Avenue in Parañaque City.

Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
Ali 2	LIBERATED
Ali 3	DARK BLUE
Ali 4	MATRIX REVOLUTION
Ali 5	MATRIX REVOLUTION
Ali 6	MAPANUKSO
Ali 7	WRONG TURN

ARANETA COLISEUM

NOV 12	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 14	NCA NATIONAL 8-STAG DERBY
NOV 16	PBA GAMES
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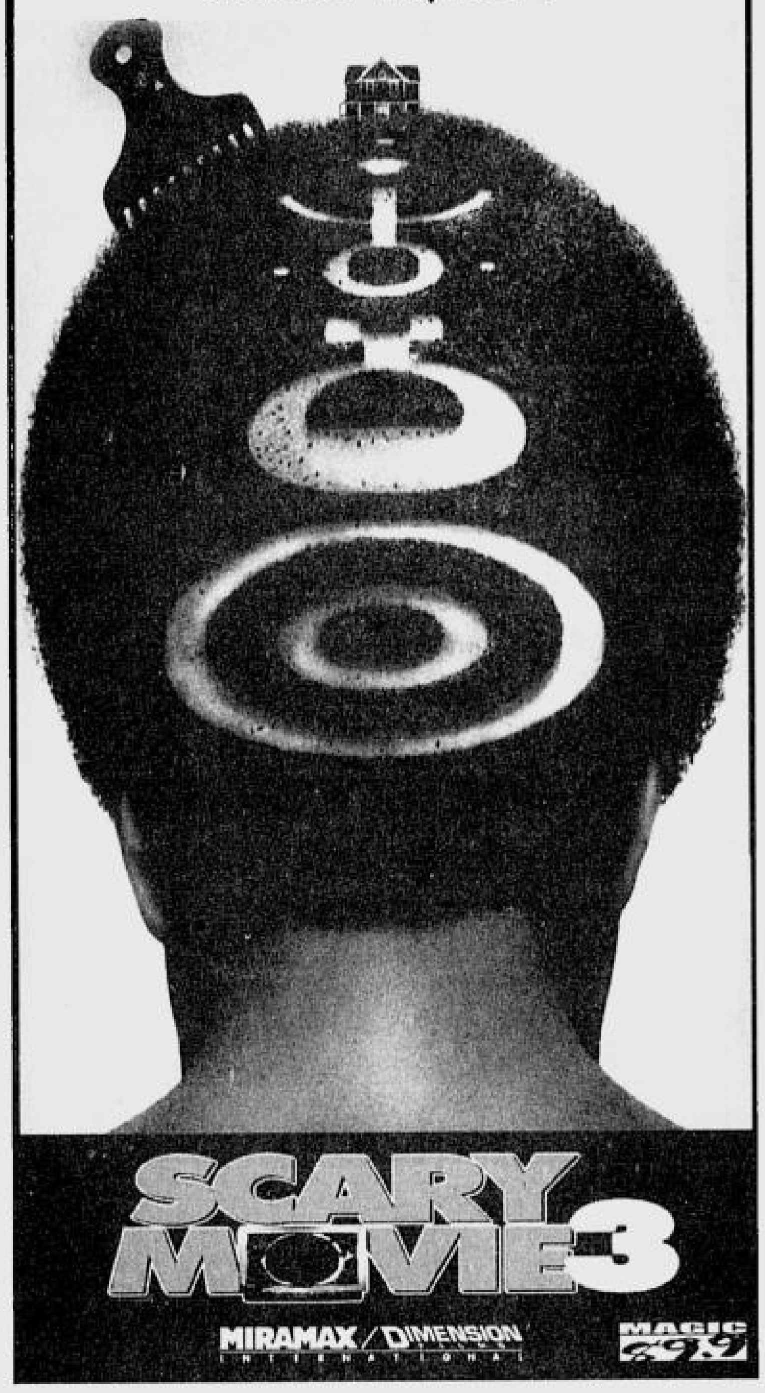
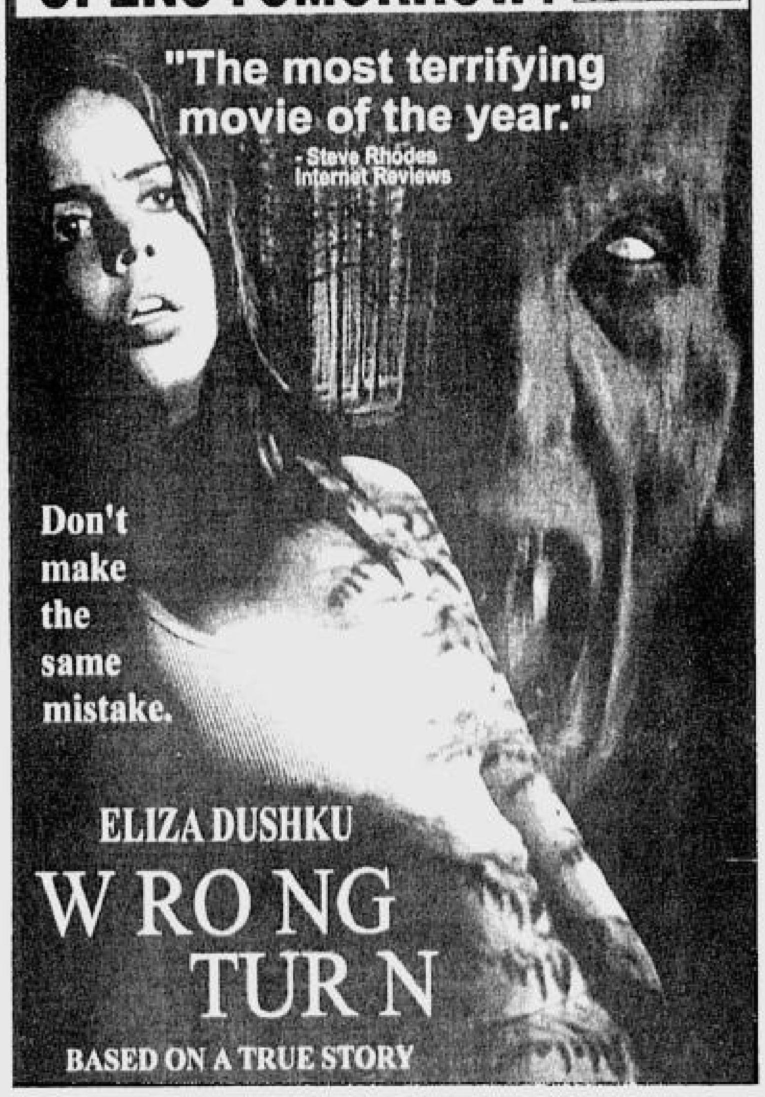
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	LIBERATED
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LIBERATED
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	LIBERATEDI
CINEMA-3	POSSESSED
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SPY
CINEMA-6	UTANG NG AMA
CINEMA-7	IDENTITY
CINEMA-8	THE PHONE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATIRX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-12	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-14	LIBERATED
CINEMA-15	MY FIRST ROMANCE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	RUNDOWN
CINEMA-4	TREK
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

You're going to see the signs before you die laughing on Nov. 19, 2003



OPENS TOMORROW! MAGIC 89.9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CINEMA 2	**MATRIX REVOLUTIONS** 12:00, 2:45, 5:30, 8:15, 11:00 **PG13** Advance Purchase: P150

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NOV 14	AKAFELLAS NO STRINGS ATTACHED	8:00PM

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	ArtFilm 1 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10	THX 1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 12:40, 3:25, 6:10, 8:55	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00	2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 9:55	Onstage REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV. 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, 9PM	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 LIBERATED	4 IDENTITY		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 3:00, 5:50, 8:40, 11:30	4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
	5 HEAD OF THE STATE		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 2:20, 5:10, 8:00, 10:50	5 UPTOWN GIRLS
	6 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS			
	7 UPTOWN GIRLS			

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	IDENTITY
2 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 GOLD (DTS-ES)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	THE RUNDOWN
6 GOLD (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8	MY FIRST ROMANCE
9	AMERICAN PIE THE WEDDING
10	LIBERATED

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3	LIBERATED

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	THE SPY
3	KERIDA
4 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5	LIBERATED

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	LIBERATED
2	MAPUPULANG LABI
3	THE RUNDOWN
4	MY FIRST ROMANCE
5	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

M Star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Piñas)
tel 873.5004

1	LIBERATED
2	FREAKY FRIDAY

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 893-4225, 892-2503

MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	THE RUNDOWN
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	
3	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	LIBERATED
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	LIBERATED
6	MY FIRST ROMANCE
7 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8 (SDDS)	IDENTITY
9 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364-3781

1	LIBERATED
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5	THE SPY
6 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 (DTS)	THE RUNDOWN
8	BELPHEGOR
9	MAPUPULANG LABI

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	LIBERATED
2 (SDDS)	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
5	AMERICAN PSYCHO

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	LIBERATED
3 (DTS)	THE SPY
4	MAPUPULANG LABI
5 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIOS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	RESERVE

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

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MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	MMATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	LIBERATED
4	

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	THE SPY
3	RESERVE
4	MY FIRST ROMANCE
5	LIBERATED

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	LIBERATED
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE RUNDOWN
4 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6	DARK WATER
7	THE SPY

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0926

1	LIBERATED
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 (DTS)	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	LIBERATED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	INNERSENSES
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BUGBOG SARADO
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
4 (DTS)	MY FIRST ROMANCE

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 (DTS)	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	UTANG NG AMA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	LIBERATED
3 (DTS)	THE POSSESSED
4	MAPUPULANG LABI

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	LIBERATED
5	SUCKERS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	LIBERATED
3	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	LIBERATED

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	MAPUPULANG LABI
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 (DTS)	THE RUNDOWN
4 (DOLBY)	MY FIRST ROMANCE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	MAPUPULANG LABI
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	MAPUPULANG LABI
3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	MR BONES

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 (DTS-ES)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	MY FIRST ROMANCE

Cine Neno Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 (DOLBY)	THE RUNDOWN
4 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

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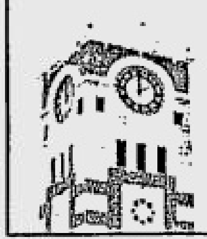

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When show biz becomes slow biz

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ENTERTAINMENT producers keep complaining that the times aren't only bad for local show biz, they're downright disastrous. To illustrate: Film production has gone down from 120 annually to only around 80 movies this year—many of them budget sleazies and quickies.

Numerous actors are out of work, and quite a number of stunt men have had to drive cabs because very few action movies are currently being produced.

In live entertainment, Filipino singers are being edged away from center stage by numerous foreign imports. As Christmas and New Year draw near, the influx of foreign singing stars is turning into a veritable flood that is threatening to drown local musical talents in its wake.

Piracy continues to be rife in the film and recording fields despite stronger efforts to curtail the activities of copyright infringers.

In general, therefore, local show biz has become slow biz, with the key exception of television, which is booming, and has roundly upstaged the former entertainment leader, the movie industry, since the start of the New Millennium.

What *are* our entertainers to do in the face of this daunting challenge? The film scene, whose flagging fortunes are symptomatic of the general malaise, can be revitalized with the influx of new producers who have a keener sense of what today's movie audience wants in terms of cinematic entertainment.

That means younger film fare, yes—but not only that: Even more crucially, moviegoers today want fresher concepts, more surprises, more family films, better production values and productions that not only entertain, but also have something to say about the way things are in this country.

In addition, viewers want to see films that inspire them, rather than just repeat the tired, cynical refrain about the nation going straight to hell in a hand basket.

We're not talking just "feel-good" movies here, but perceptively crafted films that "earn" the inspiring insights they arrive at.

The need for new, more creative and less cynical producers is so great that special incentives have to be made available by government to encourage new financiers to venture into movie production.

Training is also needed for these new investors, which is why we're glad that the Film Development Council of the Philippines is planning to offer a course in film production. We know that many people are interested in taking this course, so we trust that it will start soon.

In the recording field, the "slow" season has prompted music outfits to play it safe and bank more on revivals than on original material. This may make sense financially, but it's creatively unproductive, so we trust that recording companies turn more proactive next year.

For new material to find an enthusiastic audience, it's key that established singers energize their already predictable acts, and that exciting young talents are discovered. Thus the talent search initiatives that we now see on TV are all to the good, and should be encouraged.

Starsvenue acoustic artists

ACOUSTIC entertainers this month at Starsvenue on Pasay Road, corner Paseo de Roxas: Monday, Package Deal. Tuesday, U Turn. Wednesday, Eva Poon and Joniver. Thursday, Christo, Friday, Dream Sequence and Smile. Saturday, Dual Sound.

'Devotion'

THE LATEST album of **Courtney Pine**, "Devotion," will be launched at noon today at Monk's Dream, Rockwell Power Plant. Pine is a popular, award-winning and best-selling jazz instrumentalist from the United Kingdom.

Guest stars

ABS-CBN'S big "Happy 50TV: The Concert" (Nov. 29 at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field) will feature guest stars **Bayani Agbayani, Francis M, Andrew E, Kristine Hermosa, John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo, John Prats, Heart Evangelista, Michael Santana, Dive, King and Claudine Barretto.**

Asian stars **Jerry Yan, Vic Zhou, Barbie Xu and Dee Xu** will also make an appearance. Call 891-5610.

Philippine premiere

RUSSIA-BASED conductor **Baatarzhavyn Enkhvatar** conducts the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra in the Philippine premiere of **Gia Kancheli's** fifth symphony, "In Remembrance of My Parents," at the Meralco Theater on Nov. 22.

The SMPO will also perform **Redentor Romero's** "Philippine Portraits" and **Antonin Dvourák's** "Cello Concerto in B minor," with principal cellist, **Francisco Llorin Jr.** Call 632-3699.

Will Binoe learn his lesson this time?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

LIEZEL Sicangco is dead-set on getting divorced from **Robin Padilla**, with whom she has four kids.

In a phone call to "Startalk" last Saturday, direct from Australia where she is based with her kids, she lamented, "*Punong-puno na ako! Pero mahal na mahal ko si* Robin. *Alam ko ang tingin ng marami sa akin ay napakamartir ko, pero matapang din ako. Sinabi ko na sa mga anak namin na gusto ko nang makipaghiwalay sa papa nila. Ayokong magsinungaling. Hindi ko na babangitin kung sinong artista ang kasama ni* Robin *nung* November 1 *at* 2. *Kahit sinabi niya sa akin na wala, silang relasyon. Pagod na ako!*"

No matter how many women have come and gone in Binoe's life, he always goes back to Liezel in the end. Will it be any different this time around?

She stood by him during the lowest point of his life, when he was behind bars for a couple of years for illegal possession of firearms. That crisis should have taught him to value Liezel more.

For a while, things were going smoothly between them after he was released from prison.

Sometimes you have to be apart to see what you had together. I remember Binoe telling me that he loves Liezel the most because she was always there for him. I know he meant that.

Could his successful comeback in show biz after his imprisonment be the root cause of his marital problems? After being "deprived" for so long, suddenly he was again surrounded by beautiful and famous women. Or is he simply a congenital womanizer?

I guess that for some men, it's not a question of how many women they get involved with but how much they love each of them. Binoe can say that being linked with different women does not make him love Liezel any less.

It's hard to negate one's true nature. For some men, womanizing is only a phase and they eventually mellow. For others, it's a way of life.

Only Liezel knows for sure if and when Binoe will stop his philandering ways. They have come this far and she has sacrificed enough so she might as well hang on. Why give up when you can give way? Isn't that what unconditional love is supposed to be?

If Binoe has not learned anything with Liezel's presence, maybe he would in her absence.

Nina at Aruba

I HAD a swell time watching Nina at my newest fave

hangout, Aruba in Libis, Quezon City. Allow me to thank the gracious owners of Aruba— Jasper Chua, Melinda Mendoza, Nel Peralta, Dominic Mendoza, Lloyd Dizon , their cool DJ Jigz Gomez and efficient manager Jokz Aquino for the red-carpet treatment.

Aruba is one cozy laid-back bar. The music is not blaring and you don't step out smelling like an ashtray. And it has the best food along the Libis strip. My personal favorites are the cheese sticks (to die for), prawns thermidore and smoked salmon with mango mousse.

I teased Nina that she already sounds and looks like her idol, Mariah Carey. I noticed that unlike other singers who do their versions of Mariah's hits, Nina's renditions are not too shrill. She still retains the crystal-clear sound of her voice even when she hits the high notes. Most singers who try to sing a la Mariah sound more like they are screaming than singing.

Mariah is going to have a concert here soon. I asked Nina why she won't wouldn't be the one to sing a duet with her idol. Lani Misalucha has been picked to sing with the international diva.

Nina sighed, "It's beyond my control. I would love to sing with Mariah even for free. But I know Lani will do a good job and I will be rooting for her. At least *may Pinay na kayang makipagsabayan kay* Mariah."

As Nina's hit song goes, she's got nothing to be jealous

about Lani's duet with Mariah. Atta girl!

Troy to Aubrey's defense

EVEN if Troy Montero says that Aubrey Miles is not yet his girlfriend, the way he comes to her defense belies his denial.. Girlfriend is just a label anyway. Who needs labels when you know what you've got?

Lately, Aubrey has been getting flak about being a prima donna. Troy clarified this: "She's a very busy girl. Since it's her manager who arranges her bookings, it can't be avoided that there are times her schedule overlaps. Aside from what her manager sets up for her, she's got a life to live, too."

Troy also wants to set the record straight about rumors that they are already living together. "If ever we were living together, I would not hide it," he said. "What for? As it is, we are taking things slowly but surely."

The sparkle in his eyes when he talks about Aubrey says it all.

Tet's past

I WAS floored when Tet Antiquiera said on my show, "celebrity DAT com" on IBC 13 that she was a battered girlfriend when she was on with Mark Gil and that she still has scars on her forehead.

How can that happen when they parted ways 20 years ago?

Tet reigned in the '70s, but times have changed. If she wants to regain lost glory she should not dig up the past. Why let a dark past haunt you? That will only lead to a bleak future.

EK celebrity bazaar

"STARRY Starry Stores: A Celebrity Bazaar" will be held on Nov. 29 and 30 at Enchanted Kingdom in cooperation with Mowelfund. All interested celebrities will be space without rental in exchange for any item they will auction. Proceeds of the auction will go to Mowelfund. Call E.K's amiable PR Tiny Garner for more details at (0920)922-9872 or 699-2345.

For feedback e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

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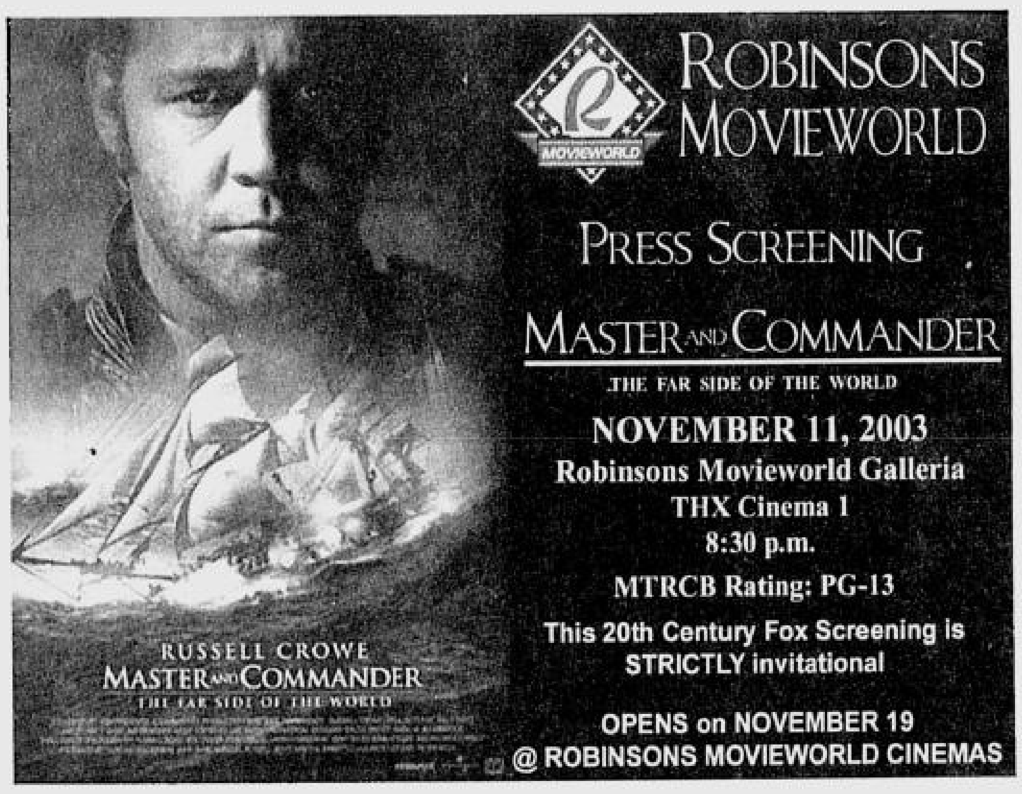
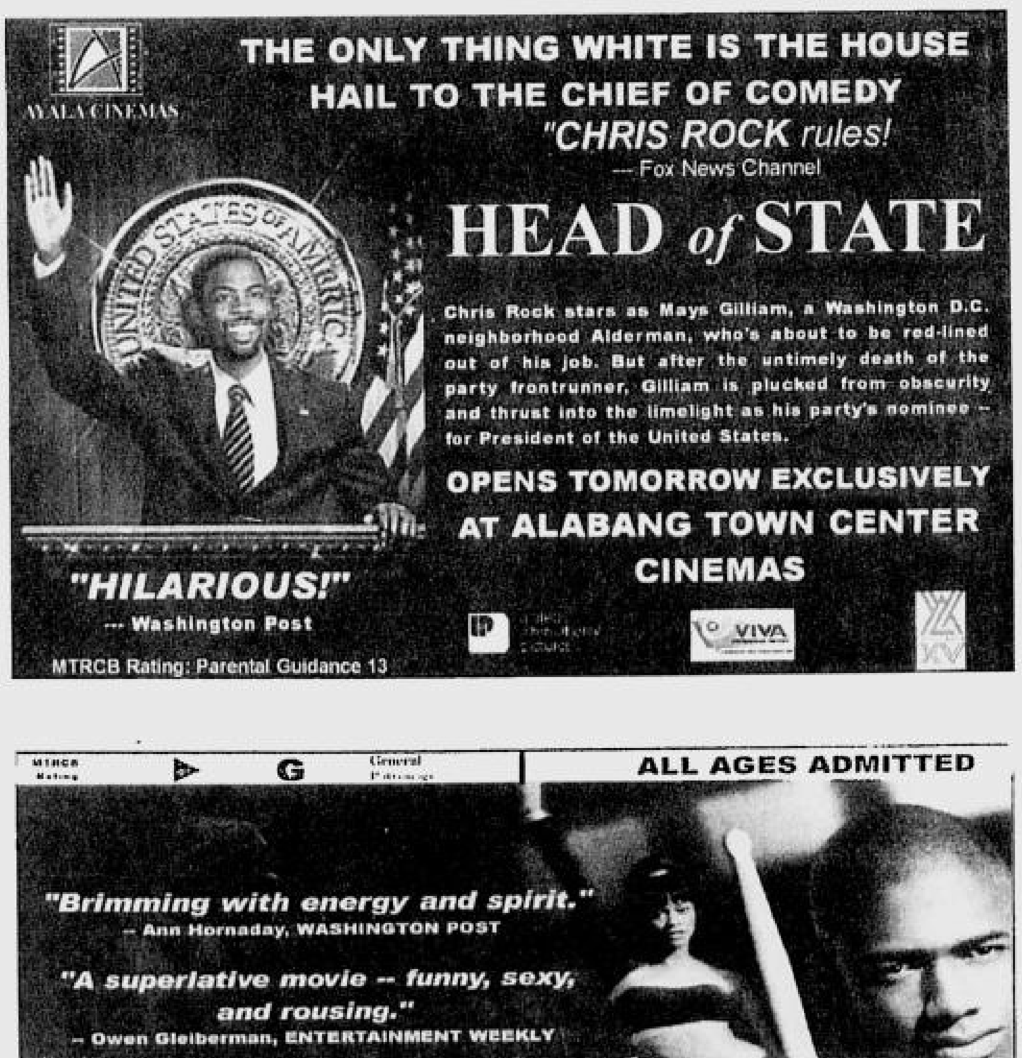
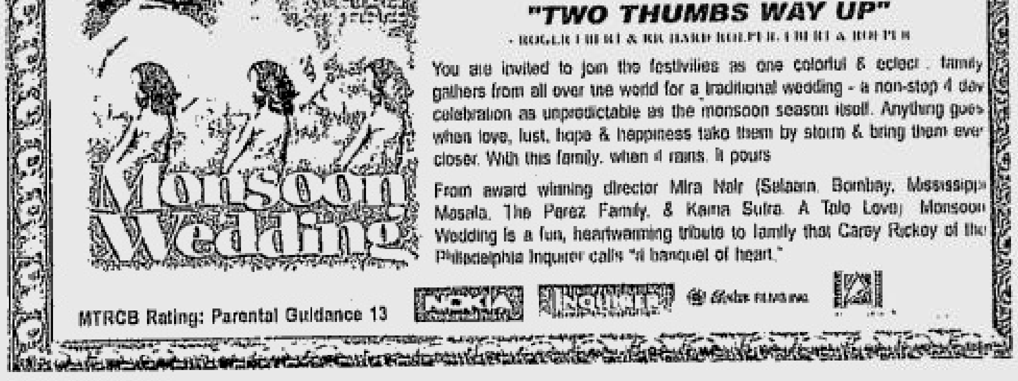
DARING, FUNNY & WELL MADE.
WATCH IT WITH YOUR BARKADA
DIANA ZUBIRI FRANCINE PRIETO
CHRISTIAN VAZQUEZ RODEL VELAYO
TUESDAY VARGAS WINSTON ELIZALDE REGGIE CURLEY
LiBeRaTed
SEIKO Films presentation directed by MAC C. ALEJANDRE


ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
PRESS SCREENING
MASTER AND COMMANDER
THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD
NOVEMBER 11, 2003
Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
THX Cinema 1
8:30 p.m.
MTRCB Rating: PG-13
This 20th Century Fox Screening is STRICTLY invitational
OPENS on NOVEMBER 19
@ ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
RUSSELL CROWE
MASTER AND COMMANDER
THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD

MTRCB RATING R-13 OPENS TOMORROW
MAKE SURE YOU'RE READY FOR THE MOST TERRIFYING ACTUAL EXPERIENCE!!
What Is It That Pulls People Into The Darkness To Be Scared To Death?
Wish mo lang takot ay nasaisip lamang!!
THE WISHER
Starring DREW LACHEY of 98 Degrees
RON SILVER LIANE BALABAN


AYALA CINEMAS
THE ONLY THING WHITE IS THE HOUSE
HAIL TO THE CHIEF OF COMEDY
"CHRIS ROCK rules!"
— Fox News Channel
HEAD of STATE
Chris Rock stars as Mays Gilliam, a Washington D.C. neighborhood Alderman, who's about to be red-lined out of his job. But after the untimely death of the party frontrunner, Gilliam is plucked from obscurity and thrust into the limelight as his party's nominee — for President of the United States.
OPENS TOMORROW EXCLUSIVELY AT ALABANG TOWN CENTER CINEMAS
"HILARIOUS!"
— Washington Post
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
VIVA


OPENS NOV. 12 EXCLUSIVELY AT ArtFilm
DARING AWARD-WINNING EXTRAORDINARY
Monsoon Wedding
"★★★★!"
NEW YORK POST · SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE · DETROIT NEWS
"TWO THUMBS WAY UP"
ROGER EBERT & RICHARD ROEPER, EBERT & ROEPER
You are invited to join the festivities as one colorful & eclectic family gathers from all over the world for a traditional wedding - a non-stop 4 day celebration as unpredictable as the monsoon season itself. Anything goes when love, lust, hope & happiness take them by storm & bring them ever closer. With this family, when it rains, it pours
From award winning director Mira Nair (Salaam Bombay, Mississippi Masala, The Perez Family, & Kama Sutra A Tale Love) Monsoon Wedding is a fun, heartwarming tribute to family that Carey Rickey of the Philadelphia Inquirer calls "a banquet of heart."
Monsoon Wedding
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
NOKIA Inquirer

MTRCB Rating G General Patronage
ALL AGES ADMITTED
"Brimming with energy and spirit."
— Ann Hornaday, WASHINGTON POST
"A superlative movie -- funny, sexy, and rousing."
— Owen Gleiberman, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
DRUMLINE
HALF TIME IS GAME TIME
NICK CANNON ZOE SALDANA ORLANDO JONES
www.drumlinemovie.com
OPENS NOVEMBER 12
EXCLUSIVELY AT GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS

Great Things Start From Small Beginnings

"Great things start from small beginnings, growing up reach early for your dreams..." To reach the Olympics is the ultimate goal of every athlete. To get there is no easy task. One has to dream big, start somewhere and be armed with the right skills, values, and ideals that would entail him a spot in the pinnacle of all sporting events.

One has got to have that Olympism element to turn dreams into reality. What then, is Olympism? Olympism is described as a philosophy of life, a way of living that exalts and combines into a well-balanced whole the qualities of body, mind, and spirit.

It celebrates life and everything that it has to offer and seeks to create a balance of ideals and values, sports, culture and education. Olympism is found in the MILO spirit, which MILO has been sharing to its public for more than three decades now.

It shares every child's dreams and takes delight in being part of a family's pride as they see those dreams come true, especially with its long-running sports program such as the MILO Summer Sports Clinics, MILO BEST Center, MILO Marathon, and the MILO Little Olympics.

The Summer Sports Clinics, which started in 1982, evolved to be one of the most-anticipated activities for the summer, while the MILO Best Center, now on its 24th year enjoys the distinction of having given birth to some of the basketball icons now playing in the amateur and professional league and it continues to be the breeding ground of future basketball stars.

The MILO Marathon since it started in 1979, continues to enjoy intense patronage with an increasing number of participants in each leg being ran.

The MILO Little Olympics similarly, enjoys warm acceptance among the youth and has been one of the yearly events eagerly anticipated in the school calendar.

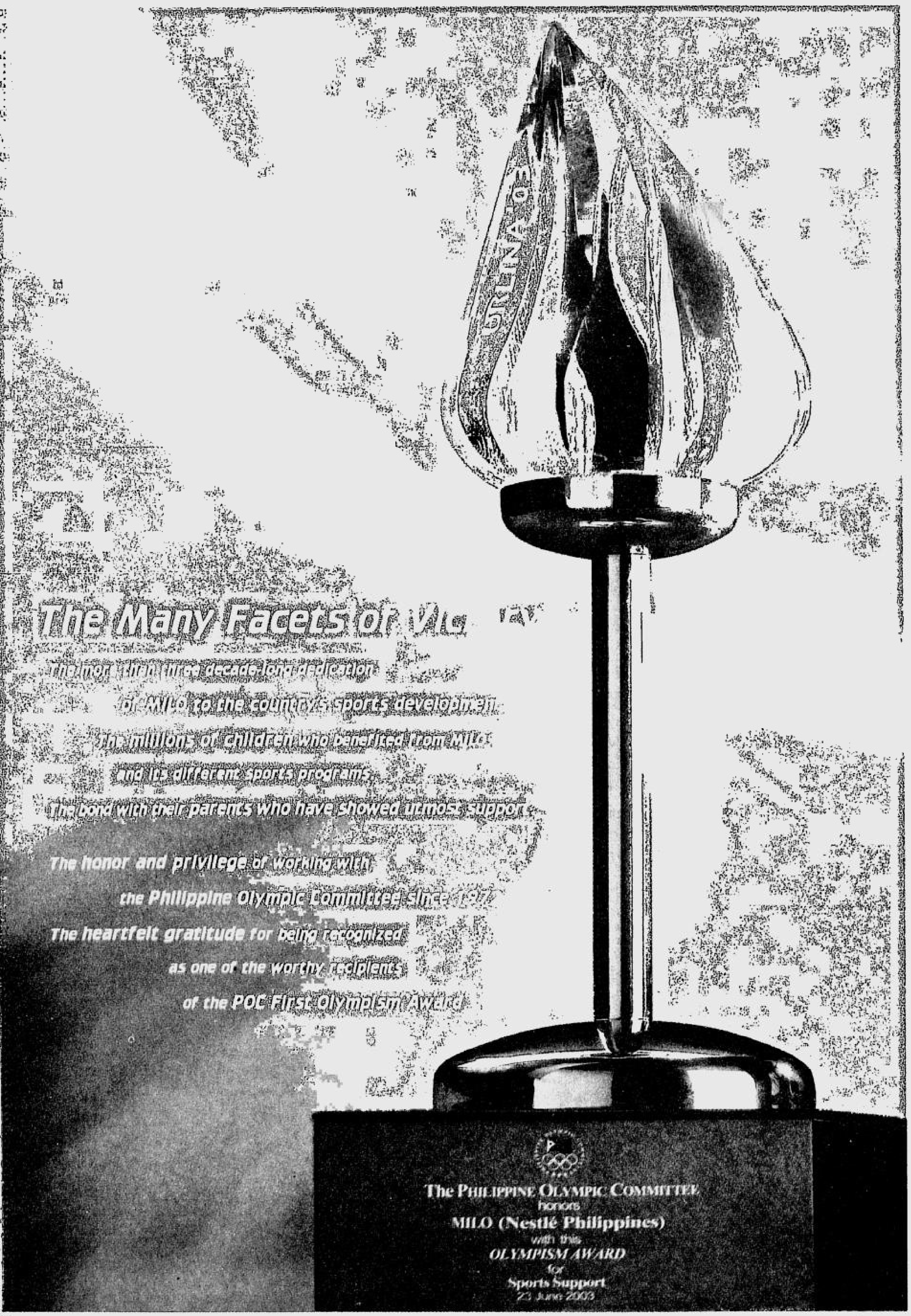
In each of these programs, MILO has given and continues to give a piece of itself and celebrates with the kids and their families the spirit of Olympism as well.

It has not only helped produce some of the country's bests, but has also made itself a partner in seeking out fresh talents that will shape and define the future of Philippine sports, and a nation of competitive, but well-grounded individuals.

With this, MILO has evolved from being a regular breakfast partner to become an all-around energy drink that could be taken any time, anywhere along with the philosophy it embraces beyond the dining table.

Because of these endeavors to promote sports development and positive values, the special commission tasked by the Philippine Olympic Committee, which included Olympian Rafael Hechanova, secretary Mar Roxas, former Mayor Gemiliano Lopez, Yolly Ong, former PBA Commissioner Emilio 'Jun' Bernardino, and Carlos 'Bobong' Velez were one in including MILO to the pioneering batch of Olympism awardees. At its simplest, Olympism is synonymous with positive ideals and discipline essential in every child's well-being.

MILO was cited along with the equally illustrious Dr. Jose C. Canlas (Sports Science and Medicine), Philippine Indigenous Games and Sports Savers Inc. (Sports and Culture), Messrs. Ramon Vecina and Alberto Garcia for sports photography, Ricardo 'Dick' Ildefonso (sports broadcasting television); Guillermo 'Willie' Hernandez (sports broadcasting radio), Gameplan (sports broadcasting television), Joaquin M. Henson (sports journalism), Julio Vargas, and Antonio de las Alas (sports leadership) Best Center Sports Inc.


The Many Facets of Vic
The more than three decade-long dedication
of MILO to the country's sports development
The millions of children who benefited from MILO
and its different sports programs
The bond with their parents who have showed utmost suppor
The honor and privilege of working with
the Philippine Olympic Committee since 197
The heartfelt gratitude for being recognized
as one of the worthy recipients
of the POC First Olympism Award
The Philippine Olympic Committee
honors
MILO (Nestlé Philippines)
with this
OLYMPISM AWARD
for
Sports Support
23 June 2003

MILO Proud Partners in Promoting Sports Development

ADVT.

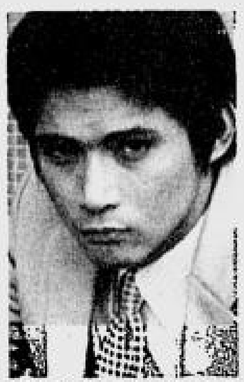
ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

AND JUDY ANN will not have an abortion in the US, either, fumes her manager

'Juday is not pregnant with Robin's baby'



PADILLA

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTRESS Judy Ann Santos, rumored to have been made pregnant by her telenovela co-star Robin Padilla, is going to the United States next week—but not to have an abortion, according to her fuming manager.

"I'm sure people would say Juday (the actress' nickname) had an abortion that's why she went to the States," said Judy Ann's manager, Alfie Lorenzo.

"This is all part of a demolition job against Robin," an angry Alfie, also a columnist, added.

He denied that his ward is pregnant with Robin's baby. He is also is worried that the rumors would worsen when Judy Ann flies to the United States next week.

The actress is scheduled to leave for the US on Wednesday, Nov. 19, to perform in a series of shows in California, Las Vegas and Chicago, and is expected to be back in Manila on Nov. 24, according to Alfie.

Judy Ann plays Princess, a young law graduate, while Robin is Ambet, a senior police agent, in "Basta't Kasama Kita," shown on weekday nights on ABS-CBN.

Last Saturday, Robin's wife, Liezel Sicangco, said in a phone call from Australia to "Startalk" on GMA 7 that she wanted an end to her 18-year marriage to Robin because of another woman, whom she did not identify.

"We did not react immediately because, in fairness to Liezel, she did not name Judy Ann as the third party," Alfie told INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday.

"But now that we have been receiving calls asking all sorts of things about Juday and Robin, we've decided to break our silence," he added.

He said he had heard of reports that Judy Ann was often seen visiting Robin in his condo unit at the Century Imperial Condominium on Timog and Morato in Quezon City.

There was also talk that Judy Ann would sleep in Robin's van, or Robin would sleep in Judy Ann's van, whenever "Basta't Kasama Kita" was taping episodes out of town, Alfie said.

He explained that it was Judy Ann, and not Robin, who stayed at Century Imperial for one month last June. Because Judy Ann lives in Susana Heights south of Metro Manila, Regal Films matriarch Lily Monteverde arranged for the actress to stay in a fifth-floor condo so she could easily get to the set of "Mano Po 2," a Regal movie being filmed for the Metro Manila Film Festival in December, said Alfie.

"But that was in June," he said. "It's already November."

"If they're talking about Judy Ann's condo unit on Quezon Avenue, that's impossible because it is still under construction."

Alfie said he stayed in a unit on the fourth floor of the Century Imperial when Judy Ann lived there.

"I never saw Robin go up Juday's unit," he said. "The guard said he saw Robin only when he dropped Juday there after work."

Alfie said there were even reports that said Judy Ann was with Robin for a two-day Halloween vacation in Tagaytay City.

"How can that be when Juday was in Batangas City with her cousins and friends at that time?" he said.

Alfie said Robin's detractors should first prove that Judy Ann and Robin are involved

'I hope my wife could give me another chance,' says Robin

JUDAY/ A23

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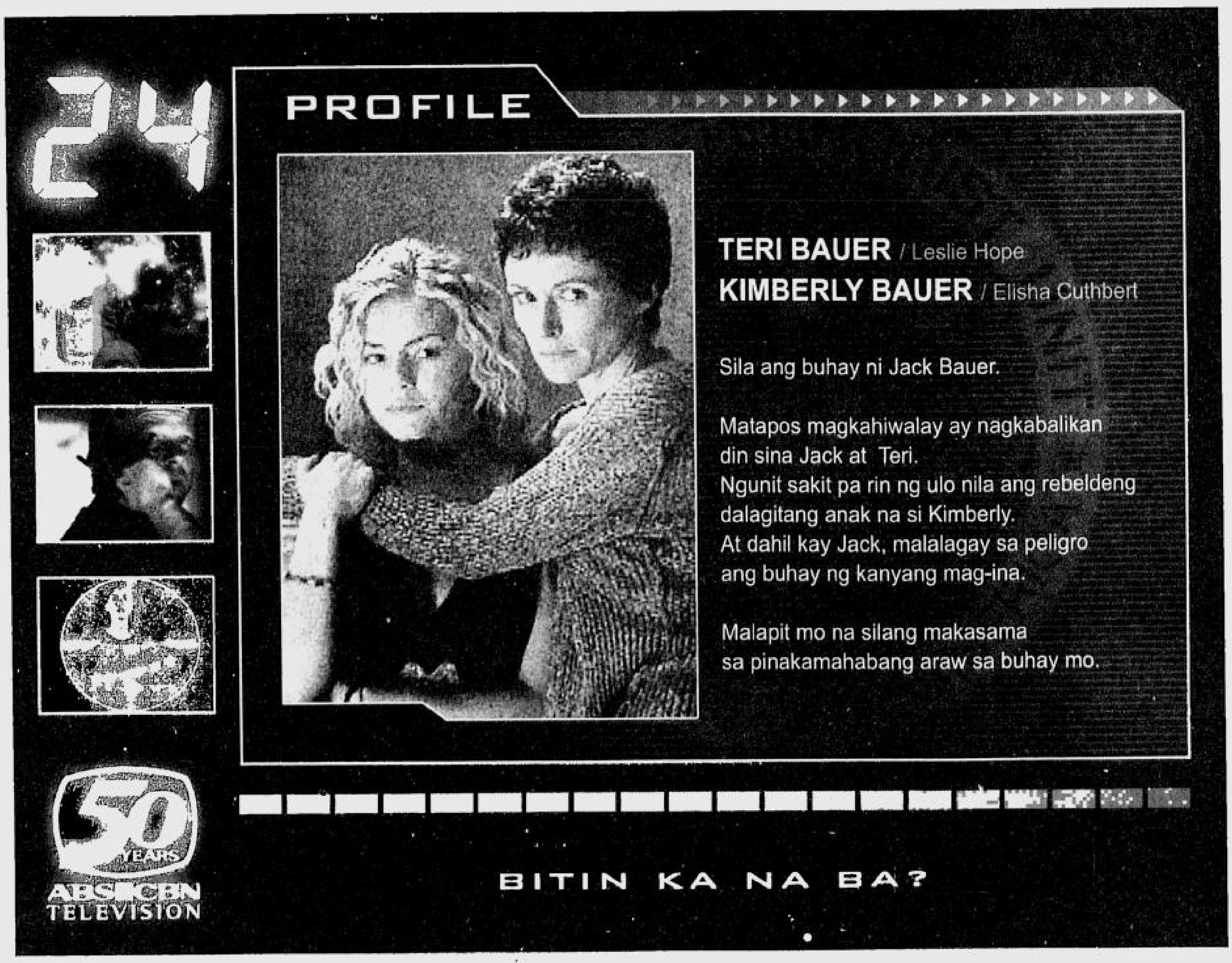


24
PROFILE

TERI BAUER / Leslie Hope
KIMBERLY BAUER / Elisha Cuthbert

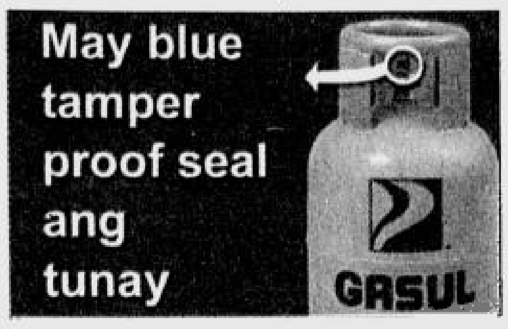
Sila ang buhay ni Jack Bauer.

Matapos magkahiwalay ay nagkabalikan din sina Jack at Teri.
Ngunit sakit pa rin ng ulo nila ang rebeldeng dalagitang anak na si Kimberly.
At dahil kay Jack, malalagay sa peligro ang buhay ng kanyang mag-ina.

Malapit mo na silang makasama sa pinakamahabang araw sa buhay mo.

50 YEARS ABS-CBN TELEVISION

BITIN KA NA BA?



TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 11, 2003
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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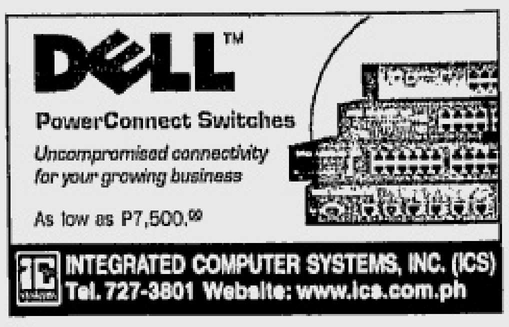
Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma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T-bill rates rise on political worries

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BENCHMARK 91-day treasury bill rate crossed the 6-percent mark and rose by 29.6 basis points to 6.262 percent in yesterday's auction marked by a low turnout and high bids triggered by the unending political controversies on the economy.

Treasury bill rates are back to their levels of the first quarter of the year when the investors sought a higher return for their placements in government securities following risks associated with the US-Iraq war, uncertainties related to the anti-money laundering legislation, and a weakening peso.

Banks usually seek a premium when placing their money in treasuries when they could use it to speculate on the local currency and buy dollars from the spot market. The peso dropped to 55.49 to $1 yesterday.

Traders said yesterday's treasury bids considered the airport siege during the weekend and the unresolved issue on Chief Justice Hilario Davide's impeachment.

The auction committee led by the Bureau of Treasury rejected all bids for the one-year debt paper but allowed the rate of the six-month treasuries to go up by 36.6 basis points to 7.421 percent.

Had the government accepted bids for the 364-day paper, the yield would have gone up by almost 60 basis points to 8.483 percent.

Yesterday's low volume allowed the government to raise only P4.25 billion out of P9.5 billion in debt paper being auctioned.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the benchmark three-month debt paper still averaged below the government's target of 8-9 percent.

"The bids reflected the market sentiment today which is within tolerable range," said the finance chief. Banks use the 91-day rate in pricing their loans.

Deputy Treasurer Mina Figueroa said the government was prepared to let the yield of the three-month notes go up to the level of the central bank's overnight rate of 6.75 percent.

"Considering the events that transpired over the weekend, banks are testing whether we would accept their throwaway bids. While we have always said we would allow rates to go up, we would continue to trash unreasonable bids," Figueroa said.

The deputy treasurer said that banks would prefer to hold on to their cash as they close their books for the year and so they sought a higher yield for their placements in government securities.

But the government would not

T-BILL/ B3

Ang says UCPB loans 'current'

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elena R. Torrijos

SAN Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang, majority owner of Lucky Star Holdings Inc., yesterday said the company's loan with United Coconut Planters Bank was performing well.

He explained that the loan to Lucky Star was classified as substandard only because the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had ordered the classification of all loans extended by any bank to the cement industry as substandard.

UCPB was reported to have lent out P1.5 billion to Lucky Star.

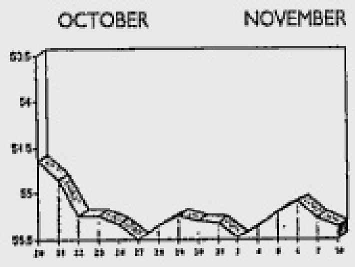
He lamented that the report did not take note of the general industry classification and instead attributed the classification to "deficiencies in documentation and financial weakness."

UCPB president Jose Querubin also said that one of three UCPB loans extended to companies linked to Ang and classified by the BSP as substandard had already been fully paid and the two other loans should be settled before the end of the year.

ANG/ B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 55.365 $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 10, 2003

¥ 109.38 = $ 1

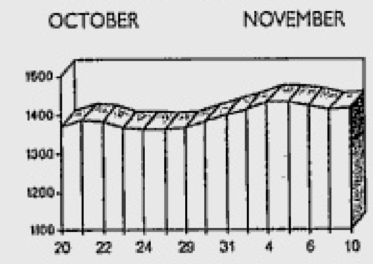
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 10, 2003

GOLD: $382.70-383.10

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 10, 2003

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares close 0.27%

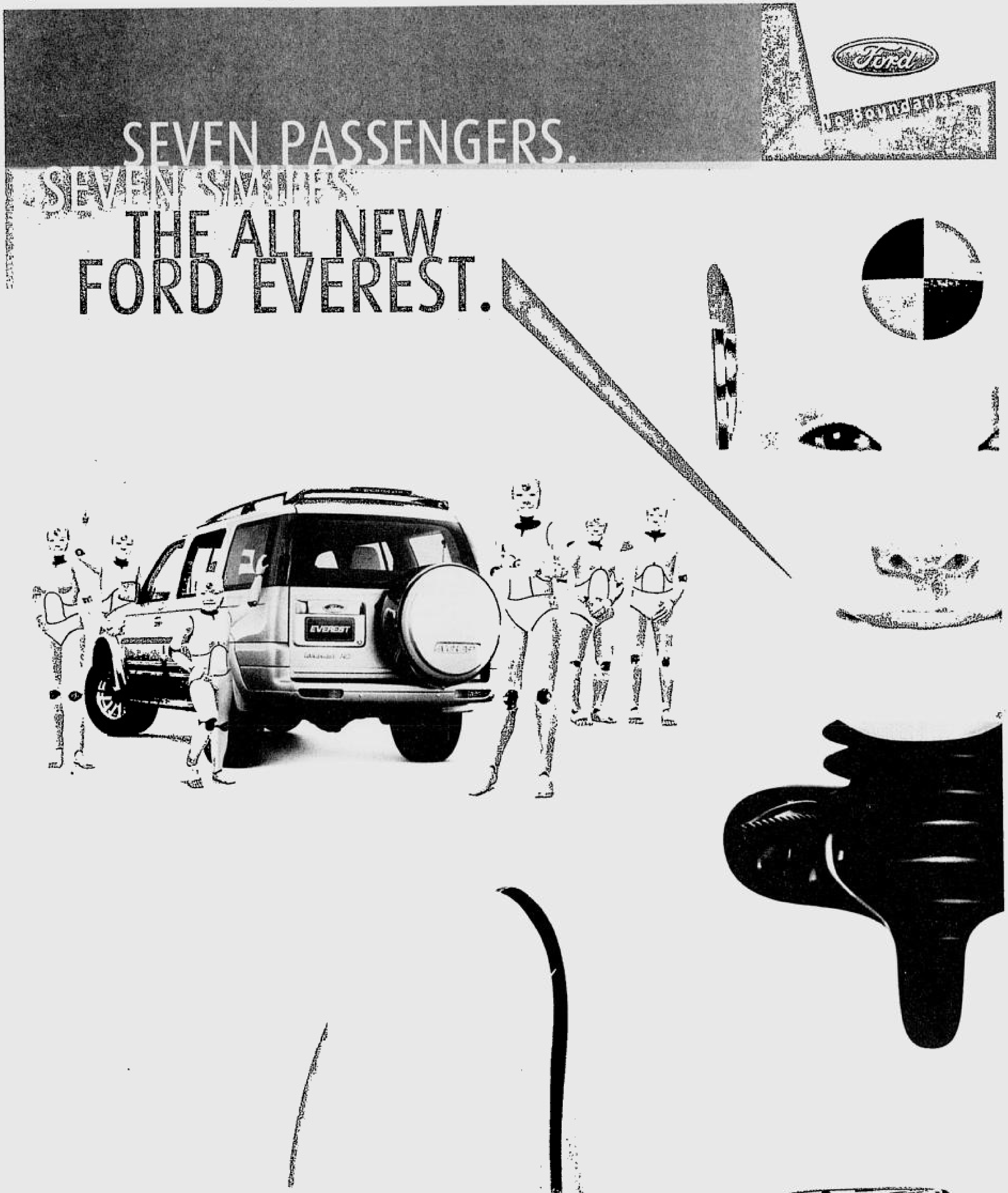
SHARE prices closed 0.27 percent lower yesterday as investors cashed out of select stocks amid political concerns over the possible impeachment of the country's chief justice, dealers said.

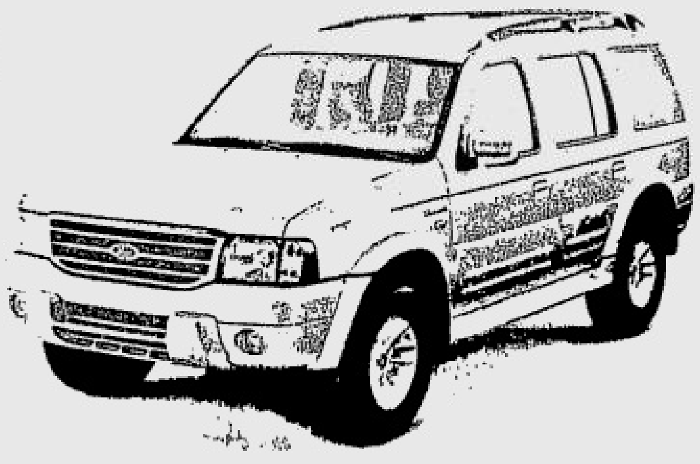
Security concerns following a three-hour siege when two men took over Manila airport's control tower at the weekend added to the political nervousness and further undermined sentiment in a highly charged atmosphere.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 3.77 points to 1,409.34, having traded in a narrow range of 1,407.71 to 1,415.51.

Turnover fell to 201.80 million shares worth P333.4 million from 392.93 million shares worth P484.98 million on Friday.

Losers beat gainers 25 to 19, with 38 stocks unchanged. *AFP*


SEVEN PASSENGERS.
SEVEN SMILES.
THE ALL NEW
FORD EVEREST.
EVEREST



Ford's newest SUV is one relaxing joyride with its ergonomically designed seats for seven, ample cargo room and multiple aircon vents. Its host of safety features include seven seatbelts, dual airbags and an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) that guarantees your family a safe trip. And with its 2,5L Turbo Intercooled Diesel engine, the new FORD EVEREST gives you extraordinary pulling power and speed. Your family deserves no less.

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Sell ahead of good news

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

DESPITE several African countries breaking off relations with the US Episcopal Church, the inauguration of the Gay Bishop went ahead. Opponents interrupted the ceremonies so often, they almost rectum. During the collection, one man put $100 in the plate. The Bishop was so impressed that he told the man that he could choose three hymns. "Thank you, your Grace, I choose him, him and him."

The Philippines is trying to persuade the Spaniards to invest in our solar and wind power. By good fortune, we are blessed with an abundance of sun. As for the other, so long as we have the Senate, there will be no shortage of hot air.

I told my wife that I was going to the doctor to get a prescription for Viagra." I'll come with you," she said. "Whatever for?" I asked. "If you are going to stick that rusty old thing in me, I am getting a tetanus shot."

There has been an outbreak of gastritis in Tondo. One man lost his job because the bylaws state that employees in an electric company may not have gastric.

A provincial family visited Manila for the first time and was fascinated by the malls. In particular, father and son were mesmerized by the elevators. An old lady in a wheelchair entered and disappeared. A few moments later, the door opened and a young beautiful blonde in a miniskirt and see-through blouse stepped out. "Quick," said the father. " Go and get your mother."

Here are a few more definitions:

Bacteria—the back of a cafeteria

Caesarian section—a neighborhood in Rome

GI series - a US ball game

Medical staff—a doctor's cane

Nitrates—Half the price of day rates

Post operative—man who carries the mail

Recovery room—a place to do upholstery

Seizure—Roman emperor

Terminal illness—getting sick at the airport

Last Monday, I arrived home dead tired after writing the INQUIRER article and my newsletter. My wife said, "Do you notice anything different about me?"

"You have had your hair done?"

"No."

"You are wearing a new dress?"

"No."

"You changed the color of your lipstick?"

"No."

"I give up."

"I'm wearing a gas mask."

***

IF you followed my advice and sold TEL on the day my article came out, you sold at the top P845. It is now P820 but get back in by January because it will rise again ahead of the full year's results. I discovered this years ago, when I spent months on a research project. The optimum strategy was to BUY 1 to 2 weeks ahead of good results: SELL the day before. It works 90 percent of the time unless the company announces an unexpected stock dividend or a large cash dividend. The results were extraordinarily good, far above even the most optimistic projection of P3.5 billion for the 3rd quarter. Smart and Talk 'N Text continued to pull in subscribers at the rate of 400,000 a month and have now reached 12 million. The last quarter is usually the best so expect this phenomenal progress to continue. All the indications are that the subscriber base will continue to expand into 2004 and probably beyond. Taking a long-term view, a P1000 target is not impossible.

But no matter how good the results are, they have been factored into the price. Over the past four months, the shares rose over 60 percent on huge well-informed foreign buying, and since I recommended it last year at P226, it has more than tripled, almost quadrupled. After the results, everybody waits for the next guy to push the shares higher but nobody does because everyone is already in. So the price drifts lower in the short-term, usually on reduced turnover.

As I feared, there were more write offs. PLDT itself is not profitable and in an attempt to reduce costs, it laid off 15 percent of the workforce at a cost of P1.9 billion in redundancy payments. Several investments, including Home Cable, were also written off and the total provisions came to P5.8 billion, which took a big bite out of the P11.3 billion, leaving P5.5 billion net. As the last quarter should produce about P4.8 billion with no further provisions, Mr. Pangilinan should be able to hit his P10 billion forecast easily. He is stepping down as CEO in order to devote more time to the parent company, First Pacific Co., but he is likely to become chair of TEL within three months.

Will SMART, which is the driving force behind the TEL, go public? The SEC wants it to do so next August but it would mean a substantial loss of dividend income to TEL. It would make far more sense if it merged SMART with PLTL, which has huge tax losses, which SMART could use to reduce its tax payments for quite some time. I see a big confrontation arising next summer between TEL and the SEC.

The only other company to report was SMC, whose nine-month profit was up 14.7 percent. However, last year, China and Hong Kong were badly affected by the outbreak of SARS, and sales in these important markets were greatly reduced. So this merely represents a recovery from a depressed period and the market did not react. GSMI reported profit was down by 6.9 percent, partly due to higher alcohol prices and partly due to the tussle with Tanduay Distillers.

The government is issuing P20 billion worth of 3-year and 5-year bonds this month. Last time, I strongly recommended them and the issue was hugely oversubscribed. I did this because of the high yield and an e-mail from the PSE assuring me that there would be a bond market by the end of September. There is still no bond market and no indication of a date. I am worried that small buyers will not be able to sell their bonds at a fair price, should they be forced to do so. Also, interest rates are on their way up so it does not look right. Last week, Australia and the UK raised interest rates and (BSP) Governor Buenaventura warned that the inflation rate would rise next year.

Wall Street produced some excellent figures last week. Third quarter GDP rocketed to 7.2 percent, far above the 6 percent the analysts were anticipating. Consumer spending, fuelled by tax relates in July and August, doubled to 6.6 percent. New jobs came in at 125,000 against an expected 65,000. Inventories rose by 0.4 percent against 0.1 percent in the past month. Did these figures send the indices through the roof? No. Despite the ecstatic look on brokers' faces, the DOW and the NASDAQ went down, Why? Because the market had gone up for months and the figures had been largely discounted. Nobody believes that these figures will be sustained in the last quarter. Nevertheless, the recovery is good news for Asia and the rest of the world. It should underpin all equity markets.

The Mutual Fund scandal, which started with Putnam, 4th largest group, is widening and threatens to engulf scores of Funds and Managers. Putnam alone had $4.4 billion withdrawals last week and this could spread like a forest fire.

In our own market, CAT has gone limit up from P1.12 to P3 in three days. The PSE is demanding a CAT scan.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 10, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17.5	17	17.25	10,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44	45.5	44	45	713,600
China Banking Corp.	660	665	660	665	14,930
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	1,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	88,500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.7	400,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27.5	27	27	138,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	3,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1665	1670	1665	1665	690
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	100,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1330	1330	1325	1325	700
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	100,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	870,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	820	825	820	820	10,240
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	16,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	2,460,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	815	820	810	820	82,290
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	3,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	69,700
Manila Electric Co. B	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	166,700
Petron Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.04	438,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	157,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	160,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	1,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	120,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	5,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.8	0.97	0.8	0.97	72,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	24,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17	16.75	16.75	37,900
San Miguel Corp. A	55.5	55.5	55.5	55.5	40,800
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	64,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	74,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	3,391,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	207,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.03	2,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	20,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.72	1.74	1.72	1.74	40,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.51	0.53	29,560,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.235	2,700,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	2,700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	800,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.5	271,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.09	0.0925	0.09	0.0925	600,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	17,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	866,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	2,160,000
Music Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.41	1,560,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	200,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Cen Azucar De Tarlac	2.95	3	2.9	3	123,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	22,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	50,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	17,800
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	27.5	27.5	27	27	30,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	900
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.001	0.0012	0.001	0.0012	15,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.5	7	6.5	7	18,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	17,924,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	130,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.23	10,830,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	640,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	1,356,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.1	7.1	3,307,000
Zipporah Rlty Hldgs Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	250,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	900,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	56,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	30,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	12,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	270,000

Economy seen to grow 4.8% in Q4

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ECONOMY is seen to expand by 4.8 percent in the fourth quarter from a year ago on the back of an expected strong export recovery, said Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

The fourth quarter growth projection will allow the country to post at least 4.2 percent growth for the full year, Neri added.

"GDP (gross domestic product) growth is expected to strengthen in the fourth quarter, with the economy receiving a boost from the rebound of the global economy and higher public spending," Neri said in a press briefing yesterday.

For the third quarter, the economy is expected to grow by 3.8-4.3 percent, with agriculture as the fastest growing sector.

Neri said it was still possible to hit a 4.2-percent growth in the fourth quarter, the low end of the government's full-year target. He admitted that it would be a big challenge for the economy to hit a 4.8-percent growth in the remaining months of the year.

"Exports have started to recover, increasing by 2.3 percent in September after declining by 7.9 percent and 2.1 percent in July and August, respectively," Neri said.

Specifically, electronic exports—which account for the lion's share of the country's export earnings—bottomed out in September to post a modest growth of 0.9 percent after contracting in the previous two months.

"The semiconductor and electronics industry is expecting exports to post double-digit growths in the last quarter. Exports are expected to further recover in 2004 as global growth picks up," Neri said.

Neri also expects that the higher government spending in the third quarter will help perk up the economy in the remainder of the year.

"With revenues on track, the government is making up for the under-spending in the first half," Neri said, noting that capital outlays increased by 67.7 percent in September.

Globe Telecom 9-mo profit hits ₱7.5B

By Abigail L. Ho

A RECORD-BREAKING quarter in terms of net increase in subscriber base gave Globe Telecom Inc. a net income of P7.5 billion in the first nine months of the year, even after booking provisions worth P895 million in the first semester.

The company posted its highest quarterly gross and net subscriber additions in the third quarter at 1.7 million and 810,000 subscribers, respectively, bringing the company's subscriber base to 8.1 million.

Before provisions, Globe's profit stood at P8.4 billion, 91 percent better than year-ago level.

Service revenue, including those derived from voice calls and text messages, surged 23 percent to P35.2 billion in the nine months ending September.

"We are happy with the robust subscriber take-up in the third quarter, despite the continuing challenges in the business environment. This has enabled us to continue delivering solid financial results," Globe president and chief executive Gerardo Ablaza Jr. said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

The prepaid cellular services of Globe and that of subsidiary Innove Communications Inc. (formerly Isla Communications Co. Inc.), Touch Mobile, boosted the Ayala-led firm's net subscriber additions in the third quarter.

Prepaid subscribers—777,335 new ones from July to September—accounted for almost 96 percent of Globe's overall net subscriber additions for the quarter.

Also giving the company sound financial results was the recent integration of all its wireline-related products and services into Innove.

Veterans Bank profit up 30%

PHILIPPINE Veterans Bank posted a 30-percent increase in profit in the first nine months of this year to P160.32 million from P123.18 million in the same period last year.

In a statement, PVB president and chief executive Ricardo Balbido Jr. attributed the profit increase to continued growth in loans, higher fee-based income, sustained trading gains and effective cost management.

He said the bank managed to increase its share of the government sector business through competitive pricing and good relationship with clients.

"I am optimistic that PVB will surpass last year's net income of P207 million and will meet the full-year annual income targets," Balbido said.

The bank said its total assets rose to P14.47 billion as of end-September from P14.22 billion as of the end of 2002.

PVB said its capital base stood at P3.6 billion and that capital adequacy ratio remained high at 39 percent, way above the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' minimum 10 percent requirement. *Elena R. Torrijos*

SM posts 14.7% growth in income

SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's largest shopping mall developer, yesterday said its third-quarter net income grew 14.7 percent, boosted by stronger rentals with the steady expansion of its malls.

The company earned P1.1 billion in net profit for the third quarter, according to calculations based on SM Prime's nine-month figures.

SM Prime recorded a net income of P959.11 million in the third quarter of 2002.

The share price of SM Prime rose 6.7 percent in the third quarter, outperforming a 6.1-percent gain in the main index .

SM Prime dropped 30 centavos to P7.10 yesterday as the main index fell 0.27 percent. *Reuters*

DISCLOSURES

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. declared a cash dividend of P0.20 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of Nov. 24. It will be paid on Dec. 8.

***

EASYCALL Communications Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 12, 10 a.m. at the Lighthouse Theatre, Port Area, Manila.

***

LIBERTY Telecoms Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 28, 9 a.m. at Palms Country Club, Filinvest Corporate City, Muntinlupa City.

***

SECURITY Bank Corp. declared a cash dividend of P0.15 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of Nov. 20, to be paid on Dec. 16.

***

MANILA Jockey Club Inc. has authorized Community Innovations Inc. to make a market study on the 6.5-hectare portion of MJCI's property in Santa Cruz, Manila.

***

BOULEVARD Holdings Inc. created a special committee composed of Alfredo Joaquin, Emmanuel Lopez-Dee and Reynaldo Maulit to determine and recommend the new par value and the decreased authorized capital stock of the company. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

November 10, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.867528412	1.000000	55.162000
Japan	Yen	0.007933	0.009144	0.504400
United Kingdom	Pound	1.453023	1.674900	92.390800
Hongkong	Dollar	0.111677	0.128730	7.101000
Switzerland	Franc	0.636205	0.733353	40.453200
Canada	Dollar	0.655926	0.756086	41.707200
Singapore	Dollar	0.498809	0.574977	31.716900
Australia	Dollar	0.615269	0.709220	39.122000
Bahrain	Dinar	2.301197	2.652590	146.322200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.231347	0.266674	14.710300
Brunei	Dollar	0.497379	0.573329	31.626000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000102	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021737	0.025056	1.382100
UAE	Dirham	0.236204	0.272272	15.019100
Euro	Euro	1	1.152700	63.585200
ArgentinaPeso	0.304396	0.350877	19.355100	
Brazil	REAL	0.302591	0.348797	19.240300
Denmark	Kroner	0.13462	0.155176	8.559800
India	Rupee	0.019164	0.022090	1.218500
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.228327	0.263193	14.518300
Mexico	New Peso	0.07892	0.090971	5.018100
New Zealand	Dollar	0.533798	0.615309	33.941700
Norway	Kroner	0.12128	0.139800	7.711600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015153	0.017467	0.963500
South Africa	Rand	0.124777	0.143831	7.934000
Korea	Won	0.000736	0.000848	0.046800
Sweden	Kroner	0.111407	0.128419	7.083800
Syria	Pound	0.020656	0.023810	1.313400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025583	0.029490	1.626700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000544	0.000627	0.034600

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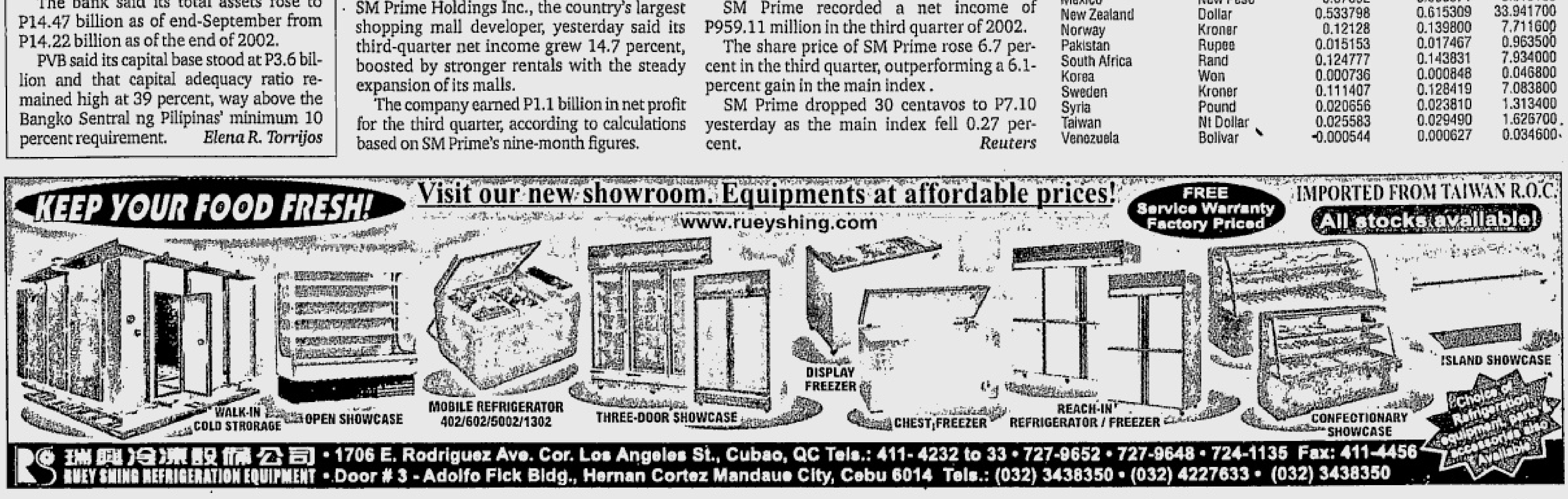
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DESPITE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES

British firms remain confident in RP prospects

By Michelle V. Remo

BRITISH companies remain confident in the Philippines' investment prospects despite swirling political uncertainties.

"Britain remains a committed partner of the Philippines, and we are not deterred by events in our efforts to develop trade between the two countries," said Eamonn Staunton, the British Embassy's First Secretary for Trade and Investment in a press briefing yesterday.

Staunton referred to the most recent threats to political stability, such as the failed takeover of the control tower of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport last Saturday and the July 27 mutiny.

Staunton added that more British firms were seen responding to the invitation of the British Embassy and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry to pour in more investments in the Philippines because of the country's potentials, such as its high-quality labor.

He said British firms were specifically exploring five areas of business opportunities in their trade mission to the country: consultancy, retail, power generation, information technology and agriculture.

A number of British firms are in the country as part of the British Trade Mission, which runs from Nov. 10 to 14. Participating British companies hope to either conduct market research to understand the local market, expand their customer base or meet potential franchise partners.

Rrade between the Philippines and the United Kingdom posted a 4-percent year-on-year increase in the first seven months of the year.

British exports to the Philippines also increased 3.5 percent in the first seven months, reaching 213 million euros from last year's 205.9 million euros.

British firms participating in the mission include: Debenhams Plc. (retailer of fashion products), European Diesel Services Ltd. (diesel engine spare parts supplier), Global Insulation Logistics Ltd. (designer and supplier of insulated structures), John Hogg Technical Solutions Ltd (supplier and manufacturer of liquid dyes), Jolinda Medical Supplies Ltd. (pharmaceuticals supplier), Natural Option (health supplements manufacturer), Provet Ltd. (pet health supplements manufacturer), Provimi Ltd. (producer of animal feeds), Ronlube Oils Ltd. (lubricants producer), Sortex Ltd (electronic color. sorters manufacturer) and RMI Ltd. (image developer).

Staunton also said that the British Embassy does not plan to issue a travel advisory against the Philippines for now.

Cement firms told to justify price hike

By Michelle V. Remo

TRADE and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II has given cement manufacturers until Friday this week to justify the recent increase in cement prices.

Roxas warned that failure to come up with a valid reason for the price hike would force the Department of Trade and Industry to withdraw the tariff shield against imports granted the cement industry.

"It (safeguard measure) puts the goodwill of cement firms to the test. It is not designed for them to engage in predatory pricing," Roxas said in a press briefing yesterday.

The DTI imposed last June a safeguard duty of P20.60 per 40-kilogram bag of imported cement in response to the urgent appeal made by the cement manufacturing firms, which claimed to have been severely affected by the entry of cheaper imported cement.

The DTI, however, noted that cement prices now average from between P105 and P110 per 40-kilogram bag, up from last year's P80 after the safeguard measure was granted.

Roxas said the price increase was questionable, considering the low demand with the onset of the rainy season and the decline in the number of major government construction projects.

The Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (Cemap) said, however, during last week's public hearing that the recent cement price hike was caused by other factors, such as the double-digit increase in the costs of fuel, coal and shipping.

Cement firms also cited the rise in the cost of electricity and the peso devaluation as factors contributing to the recent increase in the cost of cement.

Roxas, however, said the increase in the prices of fuel and electricity was not enough reason to raise cement prices because other industries did not significantly raise prices.

PNOC-EC inks exploration deal with China oil company

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PNOC Exploration Corp. yesterday signed a letter of intent with China National Offshore Oil Corp. that would pave the way for joint efforts to explore for oil and gas in the South China Sea.

The two state-run firms also agreed to engage in a joint program to review, assess and evaluate available geological geophysical and other technical data relevant in determining the potential of the area to yield oil and gas.

The two parties, however, have yet to agree on what specific areas in the South China Sea would be covered by the joint exploration activities.

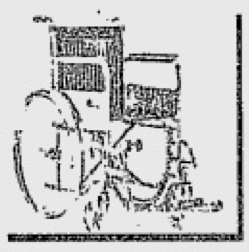
PNOC-EC president Rufino Bomasang said the LOI provided opportunities for both parties to realize their commitments to meet their respective energy demands.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr., for his part, said these urgent needs called for the cooperation from both countries.

"Both are net importers of petroleum. While the Philippines is geared toward securing more proximate petroleum resources, China is expected to surpass Japan as the world's second-largest petroleum consumer after the United States," Perez said.

Meanwhile, Energy Undersecretary Eduardo Mañalac said the tie-up with CNOOC would help local efforts to increase exploration activities in the country.

DOE records showed that the country has petroleum resources equivalent to at least 8.9 billion barrels of oil.



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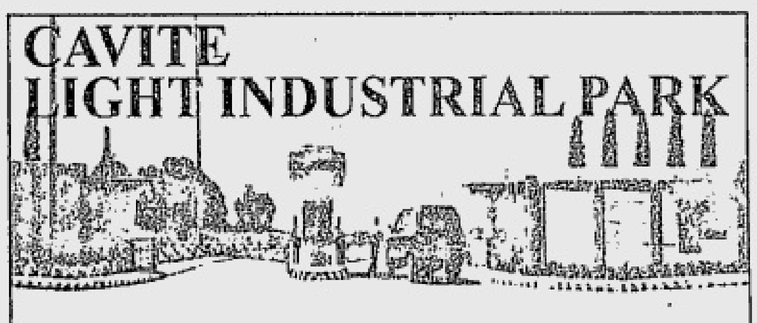

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Security Bank steps up gov't securities dealership

SECURITY Bank, consistently among the top ten government securities dealers, will step up its participation in the government securities market next year as it makes an across-the-board effort to make all its lines of business more productive, efficient and profitable.

"Participation in the government securities market has been a steady source of revenues for the bank. Given this, we would like to be a bigger player in this field," Roberto S. Reyes, Security Bank treasurer, said.

The Bureau of the Treasury, during its 106th anniversary last Nov. 4, named the top ten best performing government securities dealers in the primary market as: Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI); Citibank; Land Bank; Allied Bank; Chinatrust; Deutsche Bank; Equitable PCI Bank; ING Bank; Security Bank, and Standard Chartered Bank.

The banks were cited for aggressively lending to the government through their huge purchases of Treasury bills and bonds. Only accredited financial institutions that meet the minimum capital requirements are accredited by the bureau to bid for the government's debt papers.

T-bill rates rise . . .

From page B1

allow its cost of borrowing to go up unreasonably given its strong cash position that would continue to go up with the proceeds of two retail bond issues this month.

The government announced that it had mandated First Metro Investment Corp., HSBC and Land Bank of the Philippines to underwrite a $250-million bond issue that banks should sell to retail investors.

Figueroa said the government would close the deal within the week.

This would be boosted by the sale of P5-billion, three-year retail treasury bonds late this month. The Treasury said it would cap the retail bond issue to not more than P20 billion.

Figueroa said the public offering for the retail treasury bonds was set from Nov. 27 to Dec. 2. Investors could buy a minimum of P5,000 and a maximum of P2 million.

The financial market blamed the continued weakness of the peso, unending political controversies, and prospects of an increasing budget deficit as among the factors that prompted investors to seek a higher return on their placements in government securities.

Since the July 27 mutiny, auction results have been mostly erratic, rejecting most of the offers submitted by banks.

Figueroa said the market was looking for a clearer direction mostly on the political front. The government would bid out four-year treasury bonds today.

Ang says UCPB . . .

From page B1

The two other beneficiaries of the UCPB loans were cement firm Asturias Chemical Industries Inc. and aircraft leasing operator Skyassets Inc..

"Skyassets (loan) has been paid, fully paid (as of September). And on Asturias and Lucky Star, we are in discussions with the client and we'll be paid probably before the end of the year," Querubin said.

He stressed that the loans, even that of Skyassets prior to payment, were all current.

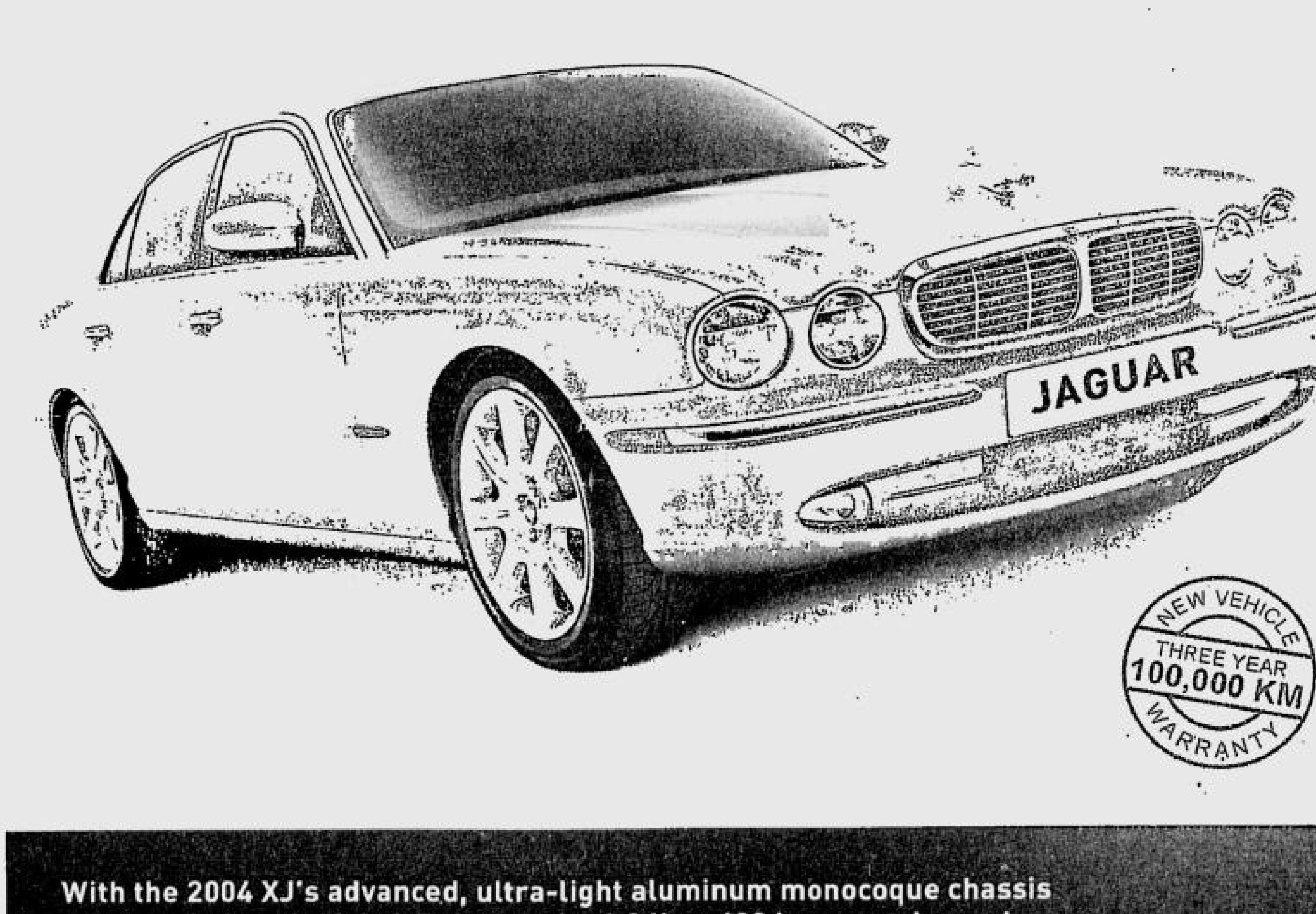
At present, the outstanding principal for the Lucky Star account is about P1.4 billion while that of Asturias is P750 million.

Meantime, UCPB swung to a profit of P5 billion in the first eight months of this year following a one-time gain from the implementation of state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.'s P20-billion rehabilitation package for the bank.

In an interview yesterday, Querubin said the profit, the first in three years, came from the reversal of provisions made on P8 billion in bad loans purchased by PDIC.

UCPB, which has long been under sequestration by the government and subject to an ownership dispute, has been suffering losses for the past few years because of the large drag of non-performing assets accumulated under previous management.

Under the financial assistance package agreement signed with UCPB last July, PDIC would buy P13 billion of the bank's bad loans and extend a 10-year direct loan convertible to equity.



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Ampi starts printing of Int'l Herald Tribune

ALLIANCE Media Printing, Inc (Ampi), a division of the Print Town Group, announced that it has begun printing the International Herald Tribune (IHT) at its Makati City plant.

"We are pleased that IHT has chosen us to provide for their printing needs," said Dennis Valdes, Ampi President. "The efforts of our employees and our continuing investments in new production equipment and technology enable us to offer high-quality, cost-effective printing to a growing number of local and international clients."

The editors of the International Herald Tribune prepare the news pages in Paris and send these files electronically to the newspaper's Hong Kong office for distribution to various printing locations throughout Asia. In Manila, Print Town receives the pages via satellite all before midnight. The page images are then transferred onto aluminum plates that go into high-speed printing presses that run early in the morning, ensuring that IHT readers get their copies of the newspaper before they begin breakfast.

"Printing in the Philippines gives IHT the ability to offer a 60 percent discount off the newsstand price and early morning hand delivery to offices and homes in Metro Manila," said Randy Weddle, IHT managing director for Asia/Pacific. "Our aim is to become the number one international newspaper in the Philippines."

The Print Town Group of companies pioneered digital workflow and sophisticated computer-to-plate (CTP) technology to shorten newspaper production times. Compared to traditional film pre-press, CTP technology improves printing quality, especially for advertisements, allowing advertisers to "stay digital" from the agency computer until the printed plate. "All our hard work is paying off," said Henry Santos, Print Town's newspaper division vice president. "Our advanced processes let readers in the Philippines enjoy the international news and perspectives that the IHT brings."

About the Print Town Group:

Alliance Media Printing, Inc. and its sister companies, FEP Printing Corp. and LexMedia Digital Corp. form the Print Town Group. The Print Town Group's presses print titles such as the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the country's largest circulating broadsheet; Inquirer Libre, the country's largest net circulation tabloid; Bandera, the largest circulation tabloid in the Visayas and Mindanao; Tumbok, one of the top ten tabloids in Metro Manila; and Cebu Daily News, the second-largest circulation newspaper in Cebu.

For IHT subscription in the Philippines, contact: Subscription Manager, International Herald Tribune, 910 West Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605 (Fax: 633-0751)

For more information contact Alliance Media Printing Inc., Louie Prieto Bldg., Mascardo Street, Makati City (Phone: 897-4386)

EVEREADY AWARDED THE FCCA FOR OUTSTANDING BATTERY BRAND

Eveready was honored by the National Consumer Affairs Foundation and the Family Consumer's Choice Awards Committee with the FCCA (Filipino Consumer's Choice Award) for Outstanding Battery Brand, last Sept. 2003, in the 11th Annual Handog sa Pamilyang Pilipino awarding ceremonies held at the Meralco theater. Present that evening to accept the award was Rollo Emata, Eveready trade market/product manager, who was awarded the trophy by Councilor Jorge Banal of QC, Edith Lim, awards committee, Jake Navea, project chair, Gov. Leonida 'Baby' Ortiz, awards committee, and Gov. Justo Ortiz, awards chairman.

DHL CEO visits the Philippines

UWE DOERKEN, the chief executive officer of DHL Express, the world's leading express and logistics company, arrived in Manila for a one-day official tour of its operations in the country.

"Philippine companies not only have the advantage of a highly-skilled and industrious workforce but also the drive to strengthen their global competitiveness through the strategic use of sophisticated global logistics management systems," said Doerken. "The government has been enthusiastic in promoting the adoption of these systems in an effort to streamline the flow of goods."

Doerken's visit includes a meeting with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and a tour of local facilities to share the results of the USD 32 million infused in the Philippines, which was utilized for the enhancement and expansion of DHL's Philippine network over the last two years. These included enhanced service centers and a newly upgraded Philippine Domestic Hub as well as other infrastructure development projects. He will also examine the development situation of the express logistics industry in the Philippines, and the market potential for these services in the country.

Doerken's first stop on this trip is to report DHL's global and Philippine development results in recent years and future investment plans in the country with President Arroyo. He will also exchange ideas on how to utilize global logistics to raise the Philippines' competitive advantages in the globalized market environment.

DHL was the first express mail carrier to enter the Philippine market in 1971 - it was the first office outside of the United States. After 32 years, DHL is still the market leader and as a result of its rebranding, one of the leading express, freight, solutions and logistics providers worldwide continuing to set the standard in the Philippine market.

"I am excited to be in the Philippines and experience how much we have evolved over the last 32 years," said Doerken. "Today, our significant investments have yielded the best possible technology and facilities that are unparalleled in the industry. Coupled with our customer-centric company culture and our continuing efforts to improve existing delivery facilities, we are therefore able to offer the best possible service to our Filipino customers."

DHL integrated with Danzas Air and Ocean, and Deutsche Post Euro Express in 2003, combining diverse and in-depth logistics capabilities with DHL's existing pick-up and delivery services. DHL continues to enhance its delivery capability in other key international markets. DHL recently completed the acquisition of Airborne Express. The combination of the ground operations of Airborne Express and DHL, under the DHL brand, will create a stronger third competitor in the U.S. express delivery market. With the U.S. being one of the Philippine's key trading partners, this strategic move is especially relevant to DHL's business here and will bring more value to Philippine customers with transpacific shipment needs.

PHILIPS CEO MEETS GMA

Royal Philips Electronics Asia-Pacific CEO Jan Oosterveld recently met with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to reaffirm Philips' long-term commitment to the Philippine economy. Currently, Philips Philippines employs 5,000 workers, which are spread out across its two semiconductor plants in Laguna and its Makati City commercial office. Photo shows Oosterveld, together with Philips Philippines CEO Menardo Mateo, presenting President Arroyo with a Philips LCD TV Monitor, one of Philips' best-selling and innovative products.

TOTALGAZ RECEIVES LPG EXCELLENCE AWARD

For its expertise in industrial and bulk LPG installations, TotalGaz, the liquefied petroleum gas unit of Total (Philippines) Corp was conferred the Asia Pacific Excellence Awards (Apea), besting other LPG brands in the local market. The award is given to top consumer products, services, manufacturers and companies which have served the well being of the general public during the year 2002. TotalGaz LPG manager Tito Velasquez (third from left) is shown receiving the award from Apea guest of honor Sen. Robert Barbers and members of the awarding committee led by Apea president/project chair Jonathan Navea (second from left).

TECHNICAL
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AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT
TESDA AUTHORITY

Republic of the Philippines
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
East Service Rd., South Superhighway, Taguig, Metro Manila

39th TESDA BOARD MEETING
4 September 2003, 9:00 a.m.
7th Floor, TESDA Board Room, Office of the Chair
Taguig, Metro Manila

Resolution No. 2003-18

Approving and Adopting the Training Regulations for the Performing Arts (Magician)

WHEREAS, the TESDA Advisory Panel (TAP) and the TESDA Experts Panel (TEP) for the Entertainment Industry Sector were organized to determine the occupational requirements, curriculum and assessment for the Performing Arts (Magician).

WHEREAS, education and training in the Entertainment Industry Sector is one of the critical factors in the development of competencies and talents/skills of the skilled workers of the entertainment industry.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board approves the Training Regulation for the Performing Arts (Magician) for adoption and implementation.

BE IT RESOLVED FINALLY that copies of this resolution and training regulations be published and disseminated to all concerned.

Adopted this 4th day of September 2003.

(Sgd.) MA. ADORINDA DE JESUS-FORRO
Board Secretary VI

Attested By:

(Sgd.) PATRICIA A. STO. TOMAS
Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment
Chair, TESDA Board

(PDI – November 11, 2003)

STAGE INAUGURATION

Congratulations to the residents of Barangay Sto. Tomas, Penaranda, Nueva Ecija, for the inauguration and grand opening of Tanghalang Leon Estanislao last Oct. 5. The stage was donated by Ruben G. Estanislao to honor his late grandfather, Leon P. Estanislao, original founder and teacher of 'Arakyo' being dramatized every feast day of the Holy Cross in Barangay Sto. Tomas Shown are engineer and Mrs. Rodrigo Pangilinan along with Jing de Guzman (formerly Miss Lingayen), principal sponsors after cutting the ceremonial ribbon with Rev. Fr. Arthur de Guzman officiating.

CHOCOLATE ADVENTURE WINNER

Shangri-La Plaza Corp and Nestle Crunch Chocolate recently announced the winner for the Great Chocolate Adventure 'guess the number of chocolate bars' contest. Photo shows Guia Tieng, senior marketing officer of SLPC handing over the prize to Camille Francesca Carreon of Northwood Village in Pasig City. The prize is an overnight accommodation for two at the Edsa Shangra-La Hotel.

A new landmark unfolds

THE WAIT is over and a new excitement begins as the launching of a new high rise condominium building in Makati's prime business area unfolds. For as low as P5,288 monthly, you may now own a unit at the Makati Executive Tower 2 that offers trendy lifestyle which is easy on your budget.

The Makati Executive Tower 2 is conveniently located along Cityland Square, dela Rosa St., corner P. Medina St., Makati City. Its close proximity to the Makati Central Business District, schools (Assumption College, Ateneo & La Salle Graduate School, AMA University, Don Bosco), Makati Post Office, banks, shopping malls and leisure centers truly makes it an excellent investment opportunity.

Amenities such as swimming pool, gym, sauna for men & women, roofdeck/viewing deck, provision for children's playground, function room, laundromat, and 24-hour association security will ensure luxury, elegance and convenient living at the Makati Executive Tower 2.

Office, commercial and residential units of studio, 1 2 and 3- bedroom type are available in cash or flexible easy payment scheme at very affordable prices on a first-come, first-served basis.

Another development by a trusted name in the real estate industry - Cityland.

Reserve now and join the elite group of wise investors. For more information, call Cityland 812-2222, 241-1894, 818-8888, 243-6565.

Clips

Lecture on HLURB and property development

THE URBAN Institute of Real Estate will conduct a lecture on Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) updated rules and regulations and property development at Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Park Squire Drive cor. Theater Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City on today, 1:30 to 6 p.m. Lena Vergara, deputy head of technical services, HLURB-NCR and engineer Enrico Cruz, licensed real estate consultant, will be the the resource speakers. The aim of the seminar is to provide the needed learning and updates for upcoming and current developers, professionals and property owners. Interested parties may call Urban Institute of Real Estate at 681-0928 or email urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

Aguinaldo Blend Coffee at Barakalan 2003

WANT a taste of truly revitalizing, aromatic, awakening taste? Try the new Aguinaldo Blend to perk your day. A premium coffee blended from different coffee beans known as Aguinaldo coffee was developed to suit the Filipino taste of brewed coffee by the Cavite State University through Dr. Alejandro Mojica Sr., research director and team leader of the Philippine Research, Development and Extension Network on Coffee. with the theme SMEs: Bida ng Katimugang Tagalog, Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) like the barako blend takes center stage in response to the National SME agenda of President Arroyo which aims to develop a vibrant SME sector. Taste this mouth-watering coffee on Nov. 12 to 16 at Barkalan 2003, a regional trade fair of Southern Tagalog products at Megatrade. Hall 1, 5th level of Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
5205452

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 LIBERATED
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 THE PHONE
6 IDENTITY
7 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 UNDERWORLD
4 THE RUNDOWN
5 MAPUPULANG LABI
6 AMERICAN PIE: THE WEDDING
7 MY FIRST ROMANCE
8 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1 INNER SENSES
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 LIBERATED
5 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6 RESERVED
7 THE RUNDWON
8 THE PHONE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 THE RUNDOWN
4 LIBERATED
5 AMERICAN PSYCHO 2
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294875

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 LIBERATED

SM BICUTAN
7763055

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 LIBERATED
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

SM CITY MARILAO

OPENS
Nov. 28

SM STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 IDENTITY
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 LIBERATED
5 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6 THE PHONE
7 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8 UNDERWORLD
9 THE RUNDOWN
10 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER

SM SOUTHMALL
8068880

1 THE SPY
2 THE PHONE
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 THE RUNDOWN
5 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6 UPTOWN GIRLS
7 MY FIRST ROMANCE
8 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
9 IDENTITY
10 LIBERATED

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350740

1 POSSESSED
2 IDENTITY
3 BELPHEGOR
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 LIBERATED
6 MY FIRST ROMANCE
7 THE RUNDOWN
8 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
9 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
10 MY FIRST ROMANCE
11 UNDERWORLD
12 THE PHONE

SM CITY DAVAO
2970998

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 INNER SENSES
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 UNDERWORLD
6 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7100977-80

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 BUGBOG SARADO
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6320101

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
RESERVE-A-SEAT dial 6366999
2 THE RUNDOWN
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 THE PHONE
6 IDENTITY
7 UNDERWORLD
8 THE SPY
9 LIBERATED
10 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
11 MY FIRST ROMANCE
12 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 LIBERATED
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE

SM CITY ILOILO
3208422

1 PILYA
2 RESERVED
3 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE
5 UNDERWORLD
6 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 RESERVED
8 VISIBLE SECRET 2

SM CITY MANILA
5230048

1 POSSESSED
2 THE PHONE
3 UPTOWN GIRLS
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 THE RUNDWON
6 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
8 AMERICAN PIE: THE WEDDING
9 MY FIRST ROMANCE
10 IDENTITY
11 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
12 LIBERATED

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(088) 8552084

1 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464585

OPENS
Nov. 21

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City • 638 9781 - 85

1
THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
11:30 FS/12:00 MF/2:45/5:30/8:15/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:15 END

2
THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
11:00 FS/11:20 MF/2:05/4:50/7:35/9:50 LFS/10:20 LMF/12:35 END

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1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30 THX	4 UPTOWN GIRLS 12:05, 2:15, 4:20, 6:30, 9:00
2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 10:20, 1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00	5 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 10:50, 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30	6 IDENTITY 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55
7 MY FIRST ROMANCE 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20	9 THE SPY 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8 LIBERATED 10:30, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	10 THE RUNDOWN 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55

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Ermita
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536-7809 to 12

1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS - 11:10, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:20
2 THE RUNDOWN - 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
3 MY FIRST ROMANCE - 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
4 THE PHONE - 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
5 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS - 12:20, 3:10, 6:00, 8:50
6 LIBERATED - 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
7 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS - 10:15, 1:08, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30

Metro East
Marcos hway
682-8103/09
682-8280

1 MY FIRST ROMANCE
2 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 UPTOWN GIRLS
5 THE RUNDOWN
6 UPTOWN GIRLS
7 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8 LIBERATED

Novaliches
935-3229 / 31

1 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2 UPTOWN GIRLS
3 THE SPY
4 THE RUNDOWN
5 MY FIRST ROMANCE
6 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 THE PHONE
8 LIBERATED

Star Mills (045)875-1927 (045)961-5270		Imus (046)471-0188 / 875-5858
AMERICAN PSYCHO2	1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
LIBERATED	2	SUCKERS
MY FIRST ROMANCE	3	LIBERATED
VISIBLE SECRET 2	4	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	5	MY FIRST ROMANCE
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	6	INNER SENSES

Bacolod (034)441-0458/50		Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
MY FIRST ROMANCE	2	UNDERWORLD
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	3	MY FIRST ROMANCE
AMERICAN PSYCHO 2	4	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
BUGBOG SARADO	5	VISIBLE SECRET 2
SUCKERS	6	THE RUNDOWN

Sta. Rosa (049)837-0907		Lipa, Batangas
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	1	THE RUNDOWN
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS	2	SUCKERS
LIBERATED	3	MAPUPULANG LABI
MY FIRST ROMANCE	4	MY FIRST ROMANCE
THE RUNDOWN	5	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Malabon
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1 LIBERATED
2 MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

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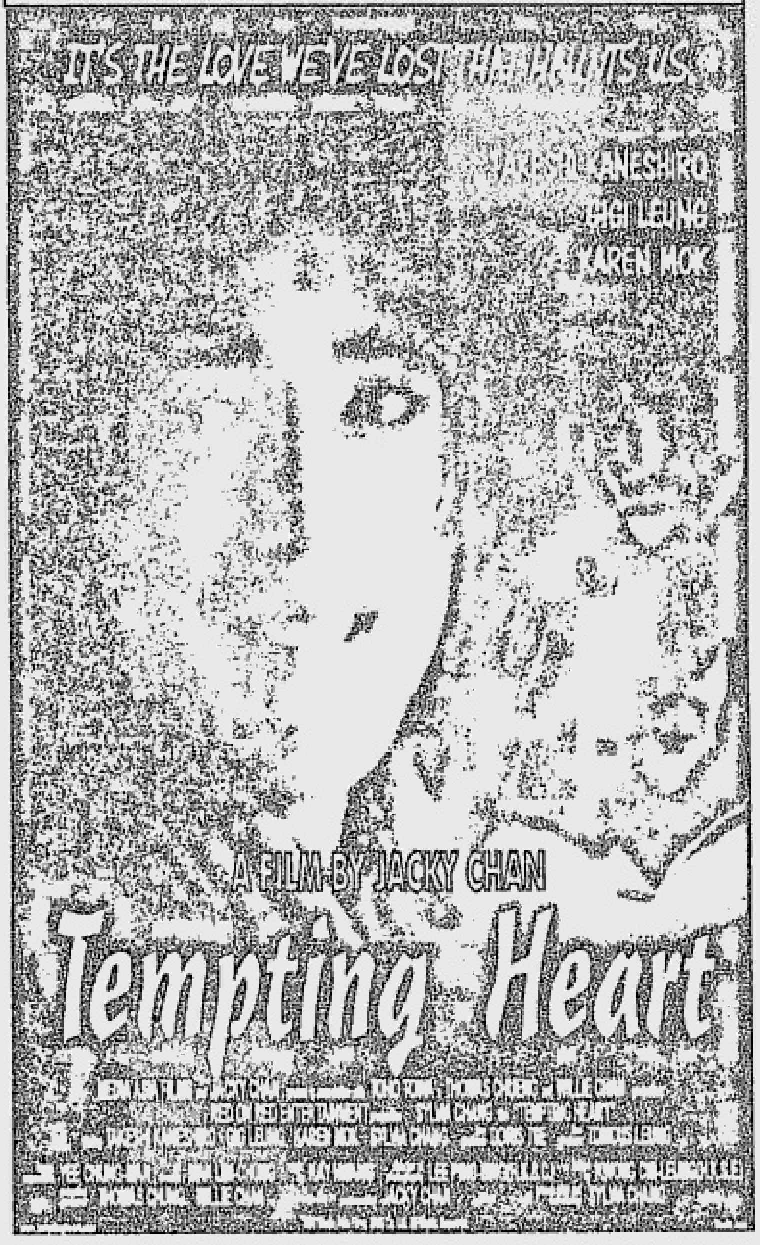

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Rockwell Center, Makati City
Tel. No. 898-1440-41

UPTOWN GIRLS PG13 12:00, 1:55, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 9:50	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:10	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50
MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30	IDENTITY R18 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS PG13 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30

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(All prices exclusive of E-VAT)

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Mondays to Saturdays: 12:00 noon Day before publication
Sundays: 12:00 noon every Thursday

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4 Lot Ownr No Down/ Equity 7T/mo. Free Layout 3mos Cnstrction 8739444

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Akhin Thai Masg BAGUIO&MLA 028347357 CBU 2532597

Anne 8818313, 0918-2665646 Lic.

Ask Rally MALE MASSEUR 4728005

Carlo M/F 0920-2497183 Lic.

Mr BODY PHYSIQUE MASSAGE 11A Kamias QC 4350978

H'SOME ATHLETES 8337361

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JB 4381050/4229411

MALE 16 PALANAN 7320659

MALE MASSEURS 8525521

MASSAGE 09193786838

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THAI Msge Lic 0919-4743278

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Edward 7289285 09195367404

FEELS GOOD 4127758

MALE SPA 7314018

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L-BAHAY 8383742/09208449984

LBAHAY 7113540

L-BAHAY 712-16-92

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•P600Trp 4153808/7001529

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1.6M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mktl 0917-8169849

MKT NR AYALA BnewTwnhse/3stry.3br/2tb/grge P3.435M 8903461 loc 34

MANILA

930T nr UST 0920-8309744

ESPANA TOWER nr UST 0920-9112910

NR LA SALLE TAFT BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

MANDALUYONG

Wack2 Royal Mansion Parking Slot (LG) 6337601-03

PASIG

Alexandra 250m² 3BR 2PS Improved@9.6M 6337601-03

QUEZON CITY

2BR CUBAO P1M 9120679

CUBAO 1.4M 10%DP 9132224

LOYOLA GRAND MANSION 6.5M Neg 202FA 4BR w/attic 4TB S'pool Gazebo Tennis Basketball Court T-435-1779 361-0855 • 924-1647 Cel.0917-8410620 (text msg)

TAGUIG

RFO 1.6-4M 10%DP 2 Move In 2 to 4BR • 0926-2264076

LOT

LAS PINAS

TALON 204m²@P4,000 639-1694 / 0917-8102903

QUEZON CITY

ACROPOLIS cor lot AM Sun 514m²@34T/m² 6337601-03

KAMUNING RD 450 SM CALL ULY 0917-7964928 / 2871221

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

QUEZON CITY

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS choice lots w/ view 426-5650•929-1832

RIZAL

★ RUSH Valley Golf ★ 1973m @4M 0916-4834182

Rush Sale! Owner Leaving Parkhills Subd. Antipolo 198m² Lot 3.2K/m² Neg. 0919-6651249

CABUYAO
MULTI-LAND iii 100sqm @ P3000 /sqm suitable for OCW'S SEAMEN GOV'T WORKERS call Tess at 8160997 or 09179166285

BATANGAS

5 - Hect Lot - Sto. Tomas Batangas. Ask P250/sqm Tel. 8105223 / 09272617308

MEMORIAL LOT

HOLYCROSS 4LOTS 9272640

Loyola Marikina 9 Vaults Family Ossuary Granite In Its Own Private Garden Stained Glass Mural P360K Nego (0927)245-3403 Rush

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1BR furn soSTR 8447524

PASIG

1Wilson 2BR 20T 4121825

★Ortigas 1BR FF Condo 4121825

SAN JUAN

GHILLS 1BR 15T 4121825

APARTMENT

MANILA

Apt 7841746/6682108

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO P3.8 LADY 9124428

ROOM & BOARD

Prj3 new 3.5T studio9137513

BEDSPACE

2Ldy 2.8ea nr LaSalle 953-0642

A/C nr LaSalle 2.5ea 9530043

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE T8181696/7586

MAKATI or BUENDIA Plamo 85/129/148/185m 1st class 8903461 loc 34 or 19 ofc hrs

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSN DRS OFW 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

OFC SPACE 40 & 150 SQM San Rafael Mandaluyong 534-9528 • 535-1242 Theresa

Table Space nr UST 7351167

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

HOUSE & LOT

GREENWOODS Nice 2stry 4BR 6TB S'Pool 2Car Grge Rent 40T Sale 8.5M 7260443

OTHER REAL ESTATE

REALTORS/SEMINAR

DINALUPIHAN,BATAAN 1000HA. LOT 0920-9112910

Look for 100has Sta. Maria /Bocaue Bul. 0920-9112910

Looking for 300has in Tanay Rizal 0920-9112910

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

MITSUBISHI

L-300 EXCEED 2002 BNEW 20,000 km mileage P600,000 neg 09174450671-TIM

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453

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1T/Hiace 9136710/4333682

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A*TOYCO UDRIVE W/ DRIVER CARS/VANS/REVO 8006595

Bnew Vans 8254058 8261045

★Vans Coaster Bus 440-9171

L300 ADV. 741-1356

STAREX 12 seater 7318549

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6567685

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106• 09177939632

PETS

DOG TRAINER 4528681

PHILIPPINE DOG SCHOOL Trains Dogs Scientifically T721-37-36 • 0917-848-93-08

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5633742 0917-8473744

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

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FEMALE

NURSE FOR PRIVATE DUTY PREFERABLY FEMALE LICENSED W/REFERENCE CALL 7118080 801-0831 RODELYN

MALE/FEMALE

OFC. MKTG.STAFF 18-45yrs old col. level/grad 9134470 Marlene

Direct Hire Ofc Staff/Mktg 18-50 Hi-Salary Agnes 4385743

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE
CEMENT SILOs -P70T
PAYLOADER P500T
IH TRANSIT MIXERS
TOWER CRANES
HOIST MACH./TOWER
CONST. ELEVATORS
STEEL SCAFFOLDINGS
Call Jho Tel. 725-3716 / 724-4413

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING 5280730 5099958 4043528

JOB HIRING 09193352395 HANA

Marketing Company needs mature person to sell franchised chain throughout Philippines. Proficient in English with strong closing abilities. Salary of P25,000 with commissions. Fax resume to • Mr. John Paul 899-9799 •

OFC MKTNG STF 09208062187

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of the late EUGENIO AGUILAR TABUENA was extrajudicially settled and partioned with waiver of rights by the heirs as per Doc. No.370; Page No.79; Book No.56; Series 2003 before Notary Public Manuel F. de Jesus of QC.
PDI-Oct. 28,Nov 4 & 11 2003

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

•OWN UR LIFE• travelandwork fromhome.com 8531008 09178901851

Extra Income? 026510616

EXTRA Income this Christmas? 0919-6912701

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BAGUIO BZNS 09189051567

OZAMIS BZNS 09189051567

LUCENA BZNS 09189051567

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

RTW Consign 09167940002

RTW/BLOUSES P28 727-4934

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MISCELLANEOUS

PERSONAL

NOVENA PRAYER TO ST. JUDE
O, HOLY ST. JUDE apostle and martyr, great in virtue, rich in miracles, near in kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful inter-cessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present, urgent petition (make your request). In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Saint Jude, pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Pray this nine times a day for nine consecutive days. On the eighth day your prayers will be answered, for this prayer has never known to fail. Please don't forget to publish this once your wish is granted.

Republic of the Philippines
TOMAS OPPUS NORMAL COLLEGE
Tomas Opus, Southern Leyte

NOTICE OF VACANT POSITION FOR PRESIDENT

The Tomas Oppus Normal College announces the opening of the search for the Presidency.

The following are the minimum qualifications for the position

1. Must be a natural born citizen of the Philippines
2. Must be at least a Masteral Degree holder but preferably a Doctoral Degree Holder
3. Must have at least a minimum of three (3) years managerial and/or administrative experience

In addition to the above-mentioned qualifications, the applicants should submit the clearances from the following:

1. Ombudsman
2. Sandigan Bayan
3. Civil Service Commission
4. National Bureau of Investigation

All requirements including clearances must be received by the Search Committee together with the application on December 20, 2003

Applications should be accompanied with:

1. Proforma Curriculum Vitaé
2. Neuro-psychiatric Evaluation Result
3. The applicant's Proposed Vision, Mission and Development Plan for the College

Applicants and/or those nominated for the position should submit five (5) sets of formal application and certified support documents on or before December 20, 2003 to Regional Director Buenaventura C. Go-Soco, Jr., Chair of the Search Committee c/o NEDA Region 8, Government Center, Palo, Leyte.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Telefax Nos.: 421-2327; 911-6001 Loc. 6592
website: www.afp.mil.ph
e-mail: cosb.j9@afp.mil.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid in the 2-Stage bid process for the Phase 1 Upgrade of One (1) BO-105C Helicopter of the Philippine Navy with an approved budget of Fifty Million Six Thousand and Four Hundred Pesos (Php 50,006,400.00) chargeable against the AFP Modernization Program CY 2000 funds.

Only bids from entities authorized by the appropriate civil aviation authority, which make, develop, fabricate, assemble, build, upgrade or otherwise produce the BO-105C helicopter, shall be entertained.

1st stage bid documents will only be available for issuance starting **November 11, 2003** until **November 26, 2003** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, GHQ, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of **Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00)**, which is not refundable. The form of payment shall be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder, authorizing its representative to purchase the 1st stage bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of said documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **November 18, 2003 at 2:00 PM** (local time) at the **Silid Panday Pira**, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders may submit their query/ies, if any, in writing to the BAC Secretariat prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

The Bidder shall be allowed to inspect the BO-105C helicopter and the Naval Air Group facilities upon purchase of bid documents until the deadline of submission of the 1st stage envelopes.

The deadline for submission of the 1st stage envelopes is on **December 2, 2003 at 9:00 AM** (local time) to be followed by the Opening of Bids at the Silid Panday Pira. Only those bidders found to be eligible shall be allowed to participate in the 2nd stage bidding activities.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids based on the grounds specified in RA 9184 without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of his bid.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN, BAC:

(original signed)
JORGE G NECESITO
Rear Admiral AFP
Vice Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Nov. 11 & 17, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Telefax Nos.: 421-2327; 911-6001 Loc. 6592
website: www.afp.mil.ph
e-mail: cosb.j9@afp.mil.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid in the 2-Stage bid process for the Phase II Upgrade of One (1) BO-105C Helicopter of the Philippine Navy with an approved budget of Thirty-Three Million and Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 33,600,000.00) chargeable against the AFP Modernization Program CY 2002 funds.

Only bids from entities authorized by the appropriate civil aviation authority, which make, develop, fabricate, assemble, build, upgrade or otherwise produce the BO-105C helicopter, shall be entertained.

1st stage bid documents will only be available for issuance starting **November 11, 2003** until **November 26, 2003** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, GHQ, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of **Three Thousand, Three Hundred and Sixty Pesos (Php 3,360.00)**, which is not refundable. The form of payment shall be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder, authorizing its representative to purchase the 1st stage bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of said documents.

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FOR THE CHAIRMAN, BAC:

(original signed)
JORGE G NECESITO
Rear Admiral AFP
Vice Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Nov. 11 & 17, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIVELIHOOD CORPORATION
7/F One Corporate Plaza Cond., 845 A. Arnaiz Ave. Legazpi Vil.,
Brgy. San Lorenzo, Makati City Tel. No. 817-0771

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Livelihood Corporation (LIVECOR), a government-owned and controlled corporation attached to the Department of Agriculture, hereby invites prospective bidders of Janitorial Services to apply for eligibility and to bid for LIVECOR's janitorial services requirements for CY 2004 to be deployed at the following stations with approved budget as follows:

Units/Projects	No. of Staffers	Budget
Central Office – Makati City	5	P 681,300.00
Metromart Complex – Mandaluyong City	10	1,348,200.00
Midmart Complex – Quezon City	2	291,000.00
Angeles Livelihood Complex – Angeles City	6	666,300.00
Maharlika Livelihood Complex (1) – Baguio City	14	1,302,500.00
Maharlika Livelihood Complex (2) – Baguio City	1	107,200.00
TOTAL	38	P 4,396,500.00

Bidding documents can be obtained anytime during office hours at LIVECOR Central Office, 7/F One Corporate Plaza, 845 Arnaiz Avenue, Legazpi Village, Makati City after paying to the Cashier a non-refundable amount of P200.00 only. Prospective bidders are invited to attend a Pre-bidding Conference to be held on November 17, 2003, 2:00 P.M. at the above-given address. Submission and opening of bid proposals and eligibility requirements will be on December 01, 2003, 2:00 P.M at the same address. The required eligibility documents are as follows:

1. Letter of Intent
2. Certificate under oath that the company represented is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation.
3. SEC or Bureau of Domestic Trade Registration Papers;
4. 2003 Business Permit and License
5. 2002 Income Tax Returns "Received" by the BIR or Authorized Banks
6. 2002 Audited Financial Statements
7. SSS Certificate of Registration.
8. SSS Certificate of Premium Remittances for the first and second quarter of 2003
9. List of existing and on-going contracts indicating the name, nature, date, amount, complete business address, telephone numbers and contact persons.
10. Certificate under oath that all documents submitted are true and faithful reproduction of the original and all the information indicated therein are true and correct.
11. Authority to Represent issued by the Corporate Secretary or Board Resolution whichever is available.
12. Certificate of Bank Deposit of not less than 10% of the Approved Budgeted Cost of the contract intended to bid.
13. Computation of Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) which is subject for validation by the Bids and Awards Committee.

The Livelihood Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defects therein and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Government. For more details, please contact Delia Araña or Eduardo P. Sajonia at Tel. Nos. 817-0439 and 817-0771.

For the Bids and Awards Committee:

(Sgd.) LYNDON PAUL R. DAZ
Chairman

(PDI – November 11, 2003)

ERRATUM

In the advertisement of Social Security System published in this paper, November 8, 2003, name of Beneficiary Item No. 25 should have been MICHAEL SAMORTIN instead of MICHAEL SENTILLAS as printed.

Our Apologies

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF PULILAN (Bulacan), INC.

1. Starting November 10, 2003, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed Rural Bank of Pulilan (Bulacan), Inc.
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the premises of the said closed bank from November 10 to December 18, 2003, to file claims for insured deposits.

   PDIC representatives are stationed at the premises of the closed bank on the above cited dates to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors during office hours, Monday to Friday.

   After the said dates, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., or by mail addressed to:

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Department
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue
   1231 Makati City

3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and/or Bank Statement and/or Certificate of Time Deposits.
   b. Valid identification documents (ID) bearing the depositor's signature.

   Other documents may be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.

4. Pursuant to the provision of R.A. 3591, as amended, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Pulilan (Bulacan) is on **March 26, 2005.** After **March 26, 2005,** PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI–Nov. 10 & 11, 2003)

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Department of Health
Center for Health Development III
Bataan General Hospital
MARIVELES MENTAL WARD
Mariveles, Bataan

SIGLA

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY/APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Health - Mariveles Mental Ward, Mariveles, Bataan, is inviting contractors registered, accredited and classified as Small A for buildings to prequalify/apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

Project : Proposed Repair of Doctor's Quarters' Building and Improvement of Drainage System of Mariveles Mental Ward
Location : Mariveles, Bataan

Prequalification/Eligibility forms will be available to contractors with the above mentioned PCAB classification upon submission of Letter of Intent and latest PCAB/IACC license to the BAC Chairman at the Administrative Office, Mariveles Mental Ward, Mariveles, Bataan. Original copies of PCAB/IACC license must be presented for authentication.

The schedule of activities is as follows

1. Deadline for the submission of Letters of Intent	November 12, 2003
2. Submission of Eligibility Statements	November 14, 2003
3. Listing of Eligible Contractors	November 18, 2003
4. Issuance of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php1,000.00	November 21, 2003
5. Pre-bid Conference at the MMW conference room, Mariveles, Bataan	November 24, 2003 at 9:00 A.M.
6. Submission of Bids/Tender Documents at the MMW conference room	December 3, 2003 not later than 9:30 A.M.
7. Opening of Bids	December 3, 2003 at 10:00 A.M.

For further inquiries, please call the BAC at Tel. No. (047) 935-4613

The DOH-MMW reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality herein and/or accept such bids or offers that may be considered most advantageous to the government.

Mariveles, Bataan November 7, 2003

(Sgd.) MANUEL P. PONCE, MD, CHA, CESe
OIC - Chief of Hospital III

(PDI–Nov. 10 & 11, 2003)

OBITUARIES

DOÑA ILUMINADA CORPUS y PURISIMA

of Vigan, San Ildefonso and Cabugao, Ilocos Sur
October 24, 1914 - November 9, 2003

Peacefully joined our Creator after receiving the last sacraments.

Her bereaved husband **Agapito** (†); children **Florencita Ledesma** (†), **Carlos** (†), **Leticia Syquia, Caesar, Hector, Marius**; children-in-law **Enrique Syquia, Joy, Doris, Elizabeth, Raquel, Debbie** and **Benjie Ledesma**; grandchildren, and great grandchildren, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie at the Santuario de San Antonio Capilla del Señor Mortuary, Forbes Park, Makati from Nov. 9 (Sunday) - Nov. 12, 2003 (Wednesday). She will be transferred to the family residence in Vigan, Ilocos Sur on Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2003. Interment will be on Saturday, Nov. 15, after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at the Vigan Metropolitan Cathedral.

JUSTICE SOCORRO TIRONA LIWAG

(Ret. Justice – Court of Appeals
Ret. Judge – RTC Makati & Caloocan)

Widow of the late **Jose Jacinto Liwag**

Peacefully joined her Creator on November 9, 2003.

Her children and grandchildren:

Marie & Mike Garrido, Alex, Marga & Junior
Jay & Jenky Liwag, Justin.

Her siblings and in-laws:

Tomas (†) & Lony (†) Tirona, Eliseo & Estelita Tirona, Rosario & Ike (†) Joaquin, Jose (†) & Ofelia Tirona, Angel Liwag, Ester & Joe Sepulveda, Mike Liwag.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on November 13, 2003 (Thursday) at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising HOTLINES:

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897-8808 loc. 514, 516
899-4425, 897-2535
897-8425 (Telefax)
CUBAO
912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)
MAKATI
892-5578, 811-4361
811-4370
KALAW
528-0213, 527-3342
MEGAMALL
635-0219, 635-0220

In Loving Memory
on the
18th Death Anniversary
of

ELISEO A. OCAMPO, SR.

(Imus, Cavite and Sta. Rita, Pampanga
who died on November 11, 1985

Masses will be offered today, November 11, 2003
at the following Churches:

St. Thomas More Co-Cathedral
Tallahassee, Florida, U.S.A. .... 7:00 a.m. / 8:00 a.m.
Imus Cathedral, Imus Cavite .... 6:00 a.m. / 6:30 a.m.

The Family requests relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

"A rare and great light has gone out,
but one that has made all others shine brigher."

FRANCIS JOSEPH K. CRUZADO

of Roxas, Oriental Mindoro

March 19, 1961 - November 7, 2003

His loving wife **Enol**;
children **Cesann, Erika,** and **Ytle**;
parents and parents-in-law **Gerry** and **Lina, Susing** (†) and **Nora**;
brothers, sister, in-laws **Anthony** and **Joy, Agnes, Peter** and **Lieña, Michael** and **Louie, Willy** and **Ellen, Volet** and **Mario, Theta, Mercy** and **Leo**;
his nieces, nephews and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Capilla Aurora A & B, Arlington East
The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Ave., cor Mercedes Ave.,
Brgy. San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2003 at the Evergreen Memorial Garden, C. Raymundo Ave., Pasig City, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Sta. Clara de Montefalco Church, Brgy. Caniogan, Pasig City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

ANGELINA REVENTAR GANSICO

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on November 8, 2003 at the age of 86.

Her bereaved children **Lita, Hilda** and **Ray** (abroad) sister **Elvira,** grandchildren, great grandchildren and all in-laws request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, Chapel IB., G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8 a.m. Mass

THE HERITAGE PARK
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Dr. Rosario Nazareno Lopez

Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice
Former Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Commission
Former Chairperson, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office
Peacefully joined her Creator on November 7, 2003
at the age of 68.

and

Rosie Nazareno Lopez

Peacefully joined her Creator on November 6, 2003
at the age of 65.

Their brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces
Roberto and **Remedios** (†) **Angeles**, **Martha**, **Angelito** and **Marilyn**; **Saturno** (†) and **Maria Ramirez**, **Cyrus** and **Marilou Monjes, Biloy Ramirez, Manuel** and **Vicky Paman, Phillip** and **Cecille Romero, Pepe** and **Florian Ramirez, Ching** and **Marife Yee, Ricky** and **Helen Ramirez, Angelo** (†); **Jose** and **Milagros Lopez, Johnny** and **Mavi Lopez, Cristina Lopez**, **Jerry** and **Denise Lopez, Gary Lopez, Bob** and **Melinda Garcia**; **Justita Lopez**, **Amado** and **Aida Lopez**, **Jaime** and **Marissa Yee**; **Epifania Lopez** (†); **Matea Lopez**; **Gregorio** (†) and **Rustica Moral**, **Patrick Moral, Allen** and **Mayette Valencia, Paolo Moral** and **Joseph Noya**.

Their grandchildren
Marietta, Mylenne and **Angelito Angeles Jr., Paolo**, **Monica** and **Angelo Monjes; Camilla** and **Coco Rubis; Angie Paman; Jigjig** and **Noah Ramirez; Kathryn, Mark, Margaret** and **Ivan Yee**; **Mica** and **Raymond Ramirez; Caryse Lopez; Chino** and **Basti Lopez; Anton Garcia, Me-An Yee; Cheska, Miguel** and **Luigi Valencia**

enjoin the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of their souls.

Their remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Jose Parish Hall, East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

On Wednesday, November 12, 2003 they shall be transferred to the ancestral home in Naic, Cavite after the Holy Mass at 9:00 a.m.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 15, 2003 at the Naic Catholic Cemetery after the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Immaculate Concepcion Shrine in Naic, Cavite at 2:00 p.m.

"In peace I shall both lie down and sleep,
for you alone, Lord make me secure ..."
Psalm 4:9

HORTENSIA ZIALCITA YUSECO

Now peacefully rests in the infinite
Grace and Goodness
of the Lord on the 9th day of November 2003
at the age of 79.

Her loving husband **Bobby** (†); her children **Roberto "Peewee"**, **Isa & Pocholo San Pablo, Sandy & Glenn Cortes** (†), **Noel & Aiveth Dy Cruz**; grandchildren **Ria, Mikko, Iggy, Alice** and **Joaquin**; her sisters, brothers, in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the **Holy Family Chapel, Mt. Carmel Shrine, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., New Manila, Quezon City.**

On **Wednesday, November 12, 2003**, she will be cremated at **9:00 p.m.** and will be brought back to Mt. Carmel.

Interment of her cremated remains will be on **Thursday, November 13, 2003** after the **2:00 p.m.** Mass at the Holy Family Chapel, Mt. Carmel Shrine.

We design **OBITUARIES** for free.

"Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no harm; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."
Psalm 23:4

CAPT. PANFILO V. VILLARUEL, JR.

"JUN"

PAF Flying School Class 1961

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on November 8, 2003 at the age of 62.

His loving wife **Marite**; children **Britch** and **Marites; Mary Ann & Martin Timbol; Michael, Patricia & Randy Reyes; Marie** and **Paolo**; grandchildren **Sidney, Nikki, Bianca, Miggy, Matthew, Rafael** and **Diego**, mother **Patricia**; brothers and sisters and other relatives and friends request prayers for his eternal happiness in Heaven.

His mortal remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Sucat, Parañaque City (inside Manila Memorial Park).

Interment to be announced later.

RealEstate

E-mail: pr_real_estate@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Prime residential haven imparts ideal Italian living

A CLUBHOUSE (scale model shown) will be provided ro each phase of Portofino Alabang to ensure residents get all the amenities they need without going too far from their homes.

By Charles E. Buban

BISCUIT-COLORED houses featuring fine stuccowork with pillars and cornices will define the homes of Portofino Alabang.

TO WAKE up to postcard-perfect Italian landscapes was how Brittany Corp. has envisioned for its clients its latest prime residential haven in Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Portofino Alabang is the latest offering from Brittany Corp. under its PrimeHUB (Habitats Under Brittany) venture.

Like every development under the Brittany PrimeHUB, Portofino Alabang is meticulously master-planned.

In fact, Portofino (Italian for fine gateway) Alabang allows its future owners a lifestyle option that provides a taste of exuberant Mediterranean living.

Italian way of life

Brittany planned a stand-out residential area that will bring its owners closer to their aspirations of the Italian way of life.

To achieve this, a strict policy on the lot size was implemented, which also includes the architectural makeup of the houses that are to be built.

In setting the architectural guidelines for Portofino Alabang, Brittany puts a premium on Italian elements in colors, finishes and overall design: Terra cotta in color, the house is a fine stuccowork with pillar and cornices as its most striking features.

This overall look will be achieved while being careful not to overstep on the boundaries of their clients' personal tastes, Brittany assured.

Plush lifestyle

The task of initially creating plush lifestyle options for the residents was given to the sister tandem of interior designers Ivy and Cynthia Almario.

Guiliana, one of Portofino's luxurious residential offerings, has been dressed up in a manner that going around this 466-sq.-m space is less than an onerous task.

The two worked around the already Italian-inspired fixtures—ceramic floors in common areas, floors in oak parquet finish in all of the house's key rooms, art pieces hung on bare walls in painted plaster finish, arched windows and high ceilings.

Complementing these fixtures are various choices of furnishing, largely from the duo's own furniture collection—the Pierto Collection and Dom Ferrer & Delfino's.

A cluster community

Instead of a linear or grid pattern, Portofino Heights—the property's residential area—is designed as a cluster community, built around a beautifully landscaped common area, where residents can congregate and engage in mutual activities.

Because the roads will follow the flow of the natural landscape, Brittany decided for underground power and communication cables that give the most natural open views.

Recio and Casas Architects made sure the Italian theme is also carried in the amenities throughout Portofino Alabang.

Over 100 hectares

Since the project sprawls over a hundred hectares, it will be divided into phases that will each have amenities like a clubhouse and a park.

Each clubhouse will have a 25-meter swimming pool and a kiddie pool, a big plaza, changing area and lockers for shower rooms, a gym, a tennis and basketball court, a ballroom for functions that can accommodate 200 persons at one time, three other function rooms for smaller events, a village store and a satellite administration office.

Of course, beyond the fine details and the picturesque atmosphere, Portofino Alabang gives the amazing advantage of being a self-contained city within reach of other cities as it is just 10 minutes away from Alabang Town Center, and a few minutes away from prime business areas, malls and other establishments.

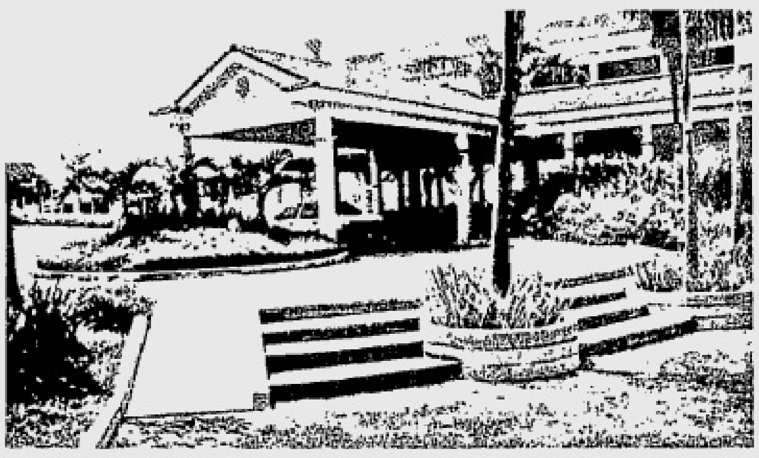
Selling way of life

Brittany was formally incorporated in May 1994 and from its inception, the company has embarked in developing themed master-planned residential upscale communities.

From Bacoor's La Residencia in 1993 to the Cedar Brooks enclave of Crosswinds in Tagaytay, Brittany has never flinched in its vision.

Brittany planned a standout residential area that will bring its owners closer to their aspirations of the Italian way of life

FROM THE ENTRANCE the place already exudes Italian ambience.


THE SAN Antonio Heights community center is the focal point of the residential area at the foothills of Mt. Makiling in Laguna.

Housing project mixes nature views, convenient location

A THRIVING community developed by Laguna Properties Holdings Inc., GDC and BAC at the foot of Mt. Makiling in Laguna is setting new standards in the mid-income housing sector. With the wooded mountain as a backdrop, San Antonio Heights offers the unique combination of pristine surroundings, a very convenient location and homes that are built to last.

Blessed with a strong water supply, the community is located just a few minutes from the crossroads of Calamba. It is also near the manufacturing plants of large multinationals such as YKK, Mariwasa, Yazaki-Torres and Yakult Philippines. Moreover, it is just over an hour to Makati through the South Luzon Expressway.

Still rustic

Although it is in a rapidly urbanizing area, the San Antonio Heights community has nevertheless retained its rustic character. Views of the mountain remain unobstructed and vegetation continues to be lush, a condition that helps maintain air quality in the area.

For this reason, San Antonio Heights, which is just a short drive from Sto. Tomas, Batangas, has also been favored by entrepreneurs and professionals operating in Batangas and Laguna. It is now a premiere residential address in the area.

Homes built to last

In addition to the serenity of the community, San Antonio residents also have peace of mind because their homes make use of a durable building system popular in Europe. LPHI is the only large-scale developer in the market that guarantees the structural integrity of its units with a 15-year warranty.

According to Manny Nisperos, executive vice president of LPHI, the building system which originated in Britain makes use of precast reinforced concrete materials that can easily be assembled. Each part is prefabricated in a controlled manufacturing environment and is subjected to strict quality control.

"These innovations allow us to offer homes that are built to last—at a lower cost. Constructing these homes would take half the usual time it would take if one used conventional methods," he explains.

New model for phase 4

In the 21-hectare Phase 4 of San Antonio Heights, a new model using the TEX Building system will be introduced in response to the demand for quality homes between the P500,000 and P1 million range. This is the Calypso model offering a floor area of 50 sq. m and a price tag of P650,000.

According to Martin C. de Leon, project officer, LPHI is able to offer sturdy homes at this price by selling the units bare, with the finishes including walls and flooring to be furnished by the owner.

Phase 4 of San Antonio Heights will have its own multipurpose hall, basketball and multipurpose courts, playground, gazebo, overhead watertank and deepwell. Homeowners will also have access to a pavilion and swimming pool located in the community center for all San Antonio residents. More important, they remain close to nature in their unique location at the foot of Mt. Makiling.

Ayala Land urged to pressure Capitol to bare financing details of joint project

By Jerry Esplanada

First of two parts

A MULTIBILLION-PESO land development project sealed Capitol Hills Golf and Country Club's inclusion in the country's real estate A-list.

But allegations of corporate misdeeds and irregular financial deals have put the Old Balara, Quezon City firm on the spot.

Add to that questions from the Securities and Exchange Commission and minority stockholders of the nearly 40-year-old corporation.

Excessive interest payments

The SEC has asked Capitol president Pablo Roman Jr. to answer, among others, charges of "excessive interest payments" on loans secured by the golf club.

A Padro Accounting and Law Office report to the SEC disclosed that in 1998 and 1999 the firm obtained loans from various individuals amounting to P8.2 million and P9 million.

The loans reportedly carried interest of 48 percent and 30 percent, both compounded monthly, although prevailing bank interest rates during the period averaged only 11-15 percent a year.

A group of club members, meanwhile, claimed that last year Capitol paid more than P27 million in interest to loans amounting to only P32 million.

The loans were secured from "various creditors whose identities remain undisclosed," they said.

In 2001, P27-million worth of club loans accrued interest of more than P14 million (about 52 percent), claimed the same club members who call themselves the "Barn Group."

In its 2003 report, Capitol acknowledged that in both 2001 and 2002 "other financing requirements of the club were sourced (from) loan(s) from various individuals."

But it did not provide other details, like the identities of the creditors and how the borrowed funds were utilized.

In a Sept. 25 memorandum, the SEC cited a club member's complaint, saying the loans' compounding interests were not in accordance with the board resolution.

Also questioned were the relationship of the creditors with Capitol officials.

"Failure to comply (with the SEC directive) shall constrain us to submit the issues to the Compliance and Enforcement Division for appropriate investigation and action," SEC general accountant Roberto Manabat told Roman.

Allegations disputed

Capitol corporate secretary Matias Defensor told this reporter that Capitol operations were "in order." All its business deals were "above board," he also said.

When interviewed, Defensor also disputed some club members' allegations of corporate wrongdoings.

In its 2003 report, Capitol said RM Veluz auditors had "examined the financial statements of the company in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards."

But Padro told the SEC "(1996) cash inflows of P112.5 million and the corresponding liabilities to Ayala Land were not shown in (Capitol's) balance sheets and statements of cash flows for the year."

"Apparently, the auditors knew that an agreement was formalized between Ayala Land and Capitol. However, despite such knowledge by the auditor that P112.5 million was disbursed to Capitol, the amount was not recognized in the books of the club for that year," Padro pointed out.

Full disclosure urged

Last week, a group of Capitol shareholders urged Ayala Land to compel the club in making a full disclosure of the financial details of their joint project, the Ayala Hillside Estates.

A SEC report said Ayala Land's advances to Capitol totaled P408,073,941 (in December 2002), of which P167,499,676 represented accrued interest.

"All we're asking is transparency. Capitol has been keeping us in the dark on some project-related financial matters," said ex-club finance officer Popoy Flores. Former Ambassador Eusebio Abaquin said more or less the same thing.

Lopsided deal assailed

Earlier, club member Manuel Sanchez, also former Capitol vice chair, accused the firm of various corporate wrongdoings.

He assailed the Capitol-Ayala Land deal as lopsided in favor of the property giant. He also questioned in court the joint venture which Sanchez said was never approved by more than two-thirds of Capitol stockholders.

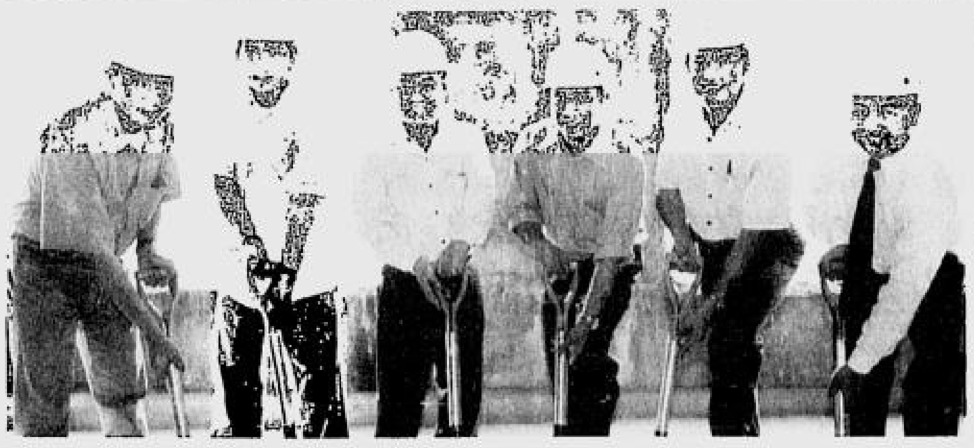
Denials

Both Defensor and Sen. Vicente Sotto III, ex-Capitol board chair, denied Sanchez's claims.

Thomas Mirasol, senior division manager of Ayala Land's Land and Community Development Group, said he "can't understand how things have become lopsided for Capitol, while we are creating enormous values for the club."

Mirasol added, "it seems obvious to me that (Sanchez's) understanding of the real estate economic model is either intentionally or unintentionally wrong."

According to SEC records, "Capitol formalized (in 1996) an agreement with Ayala Land wherein the latter will develop approximately one-half of its existing property. In consideration thereof, Ayala Land will advance the funds needed by Capitol to acquire about 140 hectares of land in Macabud, Bulacan which will be developed into a 36-hole golf course. The advances will be chargeable against Capitol's share in the gross sales of the developed lots covered by the agreement."


GREENBELT RADISSONS STRUCTURALLY COMPLETE

Premier home developer Megaworld Corp. recently held a topping-off ceremony to mark the structural completion of the 31-story, neo-contemporary Greenbelt Radissons at the project site. From left are L&M Maxco assistant project manager Dante Espeso and project manager Willie Arceo; R. I. Menguito and Associates principal Rogelio Menguito; Design Alliance head architect Lawrence Raule; Megaworld project in-charge Abet Mari and VP for marketing Noli Hernandez.

Jubilee Villas completes phase 3, builds phase 4

AFTER SELLING out Phase 1 and 2, Jubilee Villas, a 35-unit townhouse project located at 90 Banlat Road, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, has recently completed five units of Phase 3.

It is within a secured compound with swimming pool facilities and other amenities.

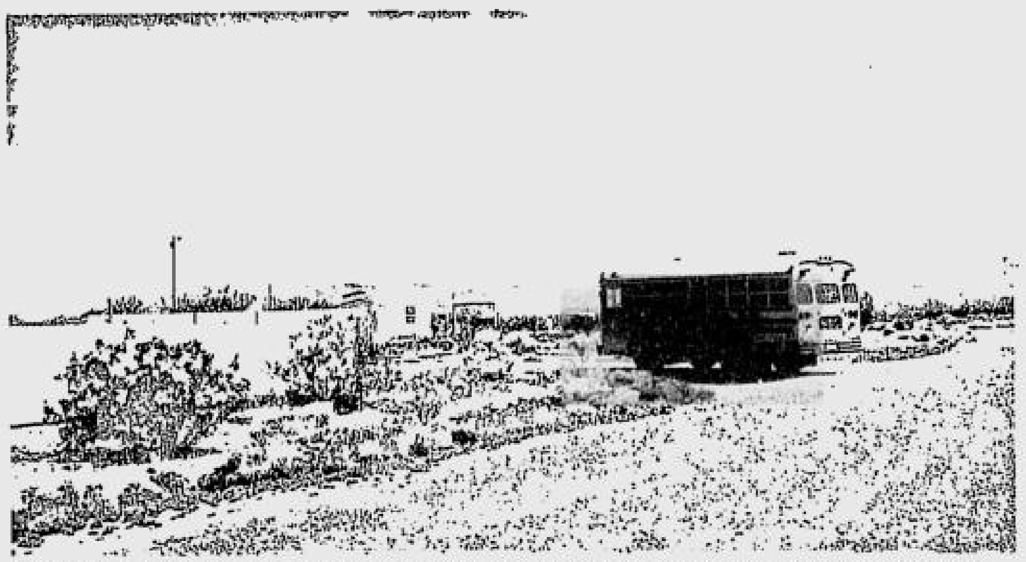
To date, only three units of Phase 3 are left for sale and available for immediate occupancy. Construction of another six units of Phase 4 will start soon.

Each unit of Jubilee Villas, with an average floor area of 135 sq.m, has three bedrooms, two toilets and bath, an attic, living and dining rooms, kitchen, a powder room, maid's room, a laundry area and covered garage.

At the current price of P25,450 per sq.m, Jubilee Villas is a wise investment to consider for your own use or to lease to a third party.

Jubilee Villas is the latest project of Epoch Properties, the developer of the fully sold-out Doña Juana and Syella Maris Townhouse projects in Pasig City.

PAHRUMP Valley is rated as one of the fastest growing regions in the United States.



THE GOLDEN Ridge Rancho is 58 minutes away from Pahrump Valley and 45 minutes from Las Vegas.

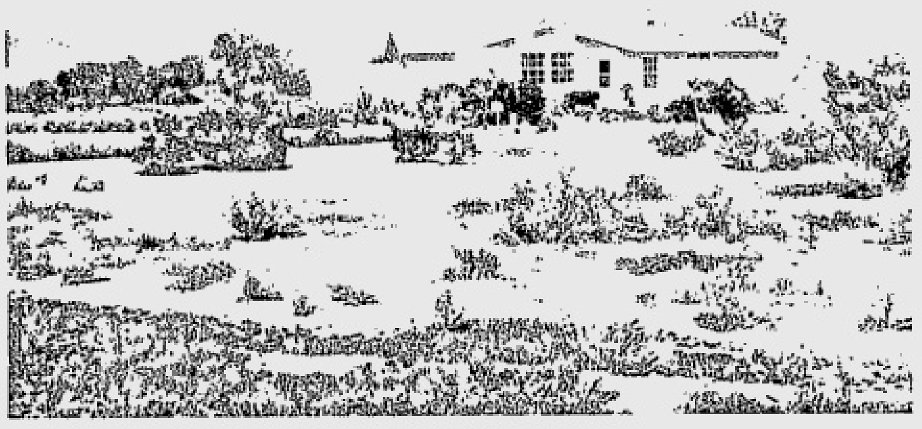
Buyers get round-trip ticket to United States

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IN 1998, Golden Ridge Corp. vice president Randy Dizon tried selling a piece of the family's Las Vegas real estate project in the Philippines but his pitches were met with a mixture of suspicion and derision.

"People looked at me as if I was offering a scam but I couldn't blame them. We heard a lot of stories where Filipino real estate buyers got burned when they purchased land overseas," said Dizon, a scion of the family that controlled the 7-R Ports, the precursor of Asian Terminals Inc.

Dizon said most of the time, US real estate brokers give only land contracts instead of titles and the Filipino buyers have to fly off to the United States at their expense to personally appraise the property for sale and verify ownership.



THE GOLDEN Ridge Rancho is located at the Old Spanish Trail Highway, Inyo County, California.

Cold shoulder treatment

But Dizon was undeterred by the cold shoulder treatment. "We believe that we have a market for US property in the Philippines if only we could build confidence among buyers that we're not out to take their money but to give them a good deal," Dizon said.

Golden Ridge lied low until 2001 when the firm came up not only with a marketing strategy to gain the buyer's confidence but also an easy financing package that addresses the buyers' concerns on fluctuating interest and foreign exchange rates.

Main come-on

"Our main come-on is that our buyers get titles to their land and not just land contracts," Dizon said.

He said the land titles—which would be transferred to the buyer's name after payment of the 12 percent down payment—could be verified or authenticated with the US Embassy.

In case of financing, the titles are held in escrow by a local bank (Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.) until the loan is fully paid. By getting titles instead of land contracts, Dizon said buyers have more control of how to develop their lots.

Gaining buyers' trust

To further gain the buyers' trust, Golden Ridge gives its buyers a round-trip ticket to the United States to enable them to personally inspect the property they are buying.

Golden Ridge also established a Philippine branch at the 22nd floor of the Robinsons Galleria Corporate Center at the corner of Edsa and Ortigas Avenue to distinguish itself from "fly-by-night" operators who merely work through agents. It plans to establish a presence in Cebu, Cagayan, Baguio and Dagupan.

Dizon said another major hurdle in selling US property to Filipinos was the high cost of money together with the volatile peso-dollar rate. "We know a lot of Filipinos want to buy property in the United States but they can't get affordable loans from banks and they are worried the exchange rate could run up the cost of their loans," Dizon said.

To address this problem, Golden Ridge provides in-house financing to its buyers—12 percent down payment with the balance payable in 10 years at a fixed interest of 12 percent and at a fixed exchange rate.

Investment potential

After overcoming buyers' fears, Dizon said the next step was to showcase the investment potential of its real estate project—the Golden Ridge Ranchos at the Old Spanish Trail Highway, Inyo County, California which is 58 minutes away from Pahrump Valley (rated as one of the fastest growing regions in the United States) and 45 minutes from Las Vegas.

Golden Ridge, which bought the 700-hectare property in 1996, has already sold 70 percent of the project.

"We're selling the property at only P130 per square meter with a minimum lot size of one hectare. It's the same value as a real estate in Tarlac but our property offers buyers a bigger potential in view of the fast rate of development in the Pahrump Valley area," Dizon said.

He said the property's value has the potential to increase to P800 per sq. m in 8 years, especially since the nearby Pahrump Valley—Las Vegas' emerging bedroom community—was expected to further evolve as a self-sustaining town with its own commercial and industrial facilities.

"People couldn't believe how low our lot prices are which is why they think it's a scam. But we think we would eventually convince jaded buyers that we're giving them a good deal and real value for their money," Dizon said.

Filinvest reviving old Calamba township

CALAMBA, once a sleepy town in Laguna, became a city in 2001, mainly due to progressive developments that started in the 1980s with the opening of South Luzon Expressway, the entrance of various industrial locators, the mushrooming of commercial and business establishments and the emergence of the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) growth corridor. The urbanization of Calamba then went into high gear.

Calamba is famous for being the hometown of the country's national hero, Dr. Jose Protacio Rizal. It is by Rizal as well as the restored Mercado ancestral home that people remember Calamba. The memory is also kept alive through Rizal's various writings, such as the poem "Memories of My Hometown," where his childhood recollections are vividly described.

How Calamba got its name

The legend as to how Calamba got its name is immortalized by the prominent *banga* (clay jar), resting on a *dikin* (cooking ring) at the center of the town square, a landmark visitors cannot miss. The story has it that a member of the Guardia Civil asked a passing native maiden carrying a clay jar on her head what the name of the place was. Not knowing what he was saying, the shy Filipina replied "Kalan Banga" and thus the name became identified with the town.

But Calamba is more than Rizal and or the *banga*. It has evolved into a community, where people from neighboring places came to settle in and contributed to the urbanization of Calamba. Into the town the people bought with them a mix of both traditional values and the modern ideals—values believed to make for a better youth and future leaders.

Refreshing countryside retreat

At this point, Filinvest Land Inc. reinforces the further appeal of Calamba by focusing on the values of its tradition and heritage when they conceptualized Ciudad de Calamba.

Now rising as a 350-hectare master-planned community, Ciudad de Calamba reinvents the old Calamba town concept into an emerging and modern Hispanic township. It is a community being offered to locators of industrial parks, their staff, the people living and working within the Laguna-Batangas area, residents who want a second home, overseas workers who desire a quiet but progressive community to settle in, and Metro Manilans who want a refreshing countryside retreat with modern amenities and facilities. Ciudad de Calamba can indeed be their home.

Traditional township lifestyle

Because the developers aim to revive the "traditional township lifestyle," the Town Center will be the central venue for community activities. Thus, it will have a church, an ecology park, a commercial area and a school plus town plaza.

At the Ciudad de Calamba, the secure and confident feeling of the residents that characterized life during the Philippine-Hispanic era will be prevalent through facets of entertainment, recreation and trade that will be adopted. The township will promote a healthy and friendly working and living environment. A resident can be quietly sipping coffee and reading the newspaper in the garden, admiring the bounty of nature. Going to work or school is just an easy walk away. On the way home, the traditional *pasalubong* to the young children can be easily obtained from the neighborhood store. Weekends will mean going to the church, a day in the clubhouse or simply bonding with family and friends. Ciudad de Calamba aims to maintain a neighborhood that is conducive to growing families.

Community clusters

Ciudad de Calamba straddles four barangays: Punta, Babuyan, Burol and Kay-Anlog in Calamba, Laguna. Only 45 kilometers from the Makati Central Business District, Ciudad de Calamba is also equally accessible from Metro Manila (45 minutes travel time), from Alabang (25 minutes) and from Tagaytay (15 minutes).

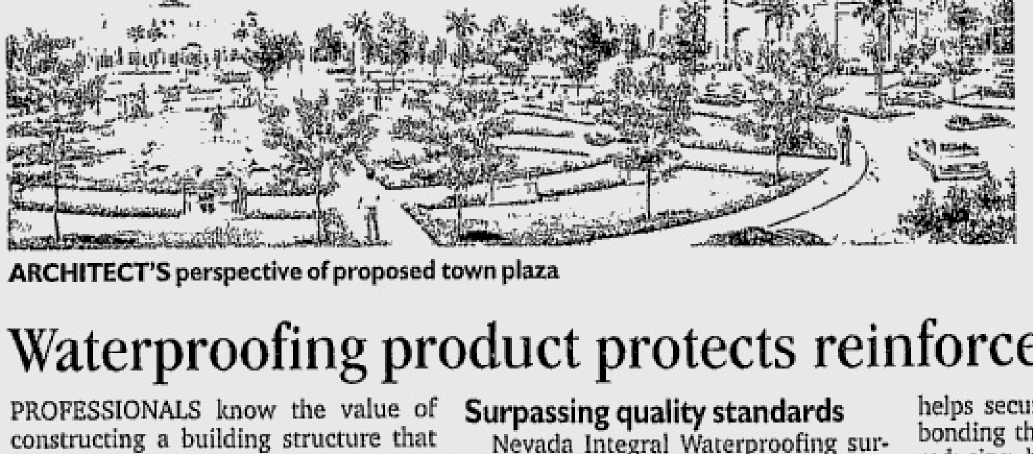
There are three-gated villages in Ciudad de Calamba Phase 1: Vista Hills 1 and 2, Punta Altezza and Montebello. Each has its own exclusive amenities such as clubhouse, swimming pool, basketball court, children's playground and picnic grounds.

For families looking for their dream home, several community clusters within Ciudad de Calamba offer various choices to suit their needs and budgets. In Ciudad de Calamba Phase 1, starter families may like the compact and affordable 90-sq.-m Redwood. Available in the Vista Hills and Punta Altezza communities, the Redwood is small enough for couples yet flexible enough for later expansion as the family grows.

Those looking for more elbow room can consider the 2-story 157-sq.-m Banyan house model in Vista Hills and Punta Altezza, or the 161-sq.-m Daphne, 153-sq.-m Selene and the 166-sq.-m Belle models in Montebello. All homes offer generous and accommodating floor plans that a family can grow into.

To date, Phase 1 developments have been fast-tracked. There is the water supply system, the PLDT exchange center, the wastewater treatment system, the Tree Park and, by 2004, a provisionary transport system will be in operation.

Highly accessible from the city, yet far enough to enjoy the bucolic pleasures of the countryside, Ciudad de Calamba offers the seclusion from the noise and pollution of city living.



ARCHITECT'S perspective of proposed town plaza

THOSE who take pleasure in farming or gardening can find refuge at La Finca.

Now you can make your dream a reality

OWNING a home is no longer a dream but a reality within reach at La Finca Farm and Country Resort.

Conveniently situated at the progressive and weather-friendly Lipa City in Batangas, La Finca has all the right ingredients for a dream home. It is a self-contained, congenial and well-secured community with first-class amenities and modern conveniences to meet the needs of residents.

La Finca also takes pride in its serene, lush surroundings and somewhat inviting laid-back, country lifestyle. This natural charm is further complemented by elegant yet functional Balinese-Japanese inspired homes with beautifully tended gardens.

Closely-knit neighborhood

Part of La Finca's vision is to build a closely-knit neighborhood. It is for this reason La Finca holds recreational activities for families and neighbors to bond together.

Keeping in mind the resident's enjoyment, it affords exclusive country club amenities and provided leisure areas like its three-part fishing lagoon, picnic groves and a kiddie playground. All these to promote quality time spent with families.

Accessibility

La Finca also prides its accessibility to and from Makati via South Luzon Expressway and Star Tollways as well as schools and commercial establishments within the area.

A mere five minutes away from Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club, avid golfers are likely scurry off and indulge into a round of golf.

Farm management

Those who take pleasure in farming or gardening may find a refuge in La Finca. Its horticultural arm, the Nursery, lets them reap the fruits of their vegetable or flower garden without actually tending to them on their own.

La Finca's farm management team takes care of the planting, propagation, harvesting and even extends assistance in selling the produce. This not only brings additional income for residents but transforms their simple lawn into an enchanting showpiece for their homes.

Owning a dream house takes a lot of resourcefulness, budgeting, determination and sound judgment especially in making the right choice. La Finca Farm and Country Resort proved to be the perfect choice to live one's dream while enjoying the beauty of reality.

Todas na ang kalawang!
NARITO NA!
Mahusay na proteksyon sa bakal at yero!
Shelby
ASPHALT
ASPALTONG PULA
Basta problema sa bubong, **SHELBY RED ASPHALT ROOFING PAINT** ang mahusay na solusyon! Ito ay matibay na pamuksa at pampatigil sa mapanirang kalawang!
Sa tag-ulan man o tag-araw, tibay ng **ASPALTONG PULA** ay di malulusaw. Mahusay na solusyon sa abot-kayang proteksyon para sa inyong mga bubong!
P 240.00 per gallon
A Quality Product of
CENTURY CHEMICAL CORPORATION
SHELBY RED ASPHALT ROOFING PAINT
Basta Shelby Aspaltong Pula, Matibay Talaga!

Waterproofing product protects reinforced steel structure vs corrosion

PROFESSIONALS know the value of constructing a building structure that hinges on durability.

No wonder Nevada Integral Waterproofing is the highly recommended integrated waterproofing product to be used as waterproofing admixture for cement-sand mortars and concrete. And because it's alkaline-based and chloride-free, Nevada Integral Waterproofing assures protection of the reinforced steel structure against possible corrosion.

Surpassing quality standards

Nevada Integral Waterproofing surpassed quality standards set by the American Society of Testing and Materials or ASTM, for highest compressive strength as compared to other existing brands, and lowest absorption after immersion in water, thereby giving the most watertight hardened mortar.

When applied to different structures like water tanks, basements, roof decks, walls and retaining walls or swimming pools, Nevada Integral Waterproofing helps secure a watertight structure by bonding the cement-sand concrete and reducing both water penetration and moisture seepage on the concrete without losing its strong grip on the structure. It also helps prevent concrete shrinkage which often leads to cracking.

Giving value for money

Compromising on waterproofing material can actually cause damage to the concrete structure eventually, so to be sure, rely on Nevada Integral Waterproofing—one best-performing, superior-quality brand guaranteed to give value for money in waterproofing.

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Nevada Integral Waterproofing for concrete pouring and mortar plastering is exclusively distributed by Amon Marketing.

Myths about home ownership

BUILDING DREAMS

By Alexis A. Acacio

FOR MOST of us, having our own home is the ultimate dream. If you have the lifetime fear of not owning a home, here are some of the erroneous beliefs that may never allow you to own a home.

Tell yourself, "I will never be able to afford one"—If you keep telling yourself that you will never be able to afford a home, then that will eventually happen. Remember that if you are on a tight budget, then you may start with a low-cost home away from the city. Once you have paid it and accumulated enough equity, then you can consider a home upgrade.

The purchase of your dream home is a step by step process that does not happen within a year but happens throughout a span of several years. Remember that there are many life stages in which we buy our homes. These are when we are just starting our families, when we are at the peak of our careers and earning potential, and when we retire. You have a lifetime of opportunities to have your home. Think big, start small but it is most important to start now.

Continuously look for the perfect home—There is no such thing as a perfect home. As you narrow down your choices, you will have to compromise a few things. Ask yourself on the most important things for you—it can be distance to your work, a private park, nearness to the church so you can hear Mass every morning.

Never read information about homes—When shopping for a home, get as much information as you can. Attend short seminars, buy books, read magazines, talk to your architect and engineer friends. Remember that the more you know about the product that you are buying, the lesser the risk in the deal that you will be engaging in. Be careful though of falling into the "analysis paralysis" trap in which by being too objective about buying, you miss out the good opportunities.

Will never buy unless the property costs way below market price—Yes, buying at a very low price can give you the best value but these opportunities are very rare in the market. If a property that is priced cheaply is up for sale, make sure that you can detect a defect within the physical or the legal aspects. Chances are, if you are not in the real estate profession, you may never see the defect and regret the decision to buy later. It is best to remember that fairly priced properties offer a fair deal to both the sellers and the owners.

Tell yourself "It's got to be a 7-bedroom house in the most expensive

MYTHS/B12

Construction Magnate's Home now Termite-Free due to Premise SC 200 from Bayer Environmental Science

It has been a year and a half since 3A Pest Management, an authorized applicator of PREMISE SC, treated the termite affected house of Mr. Isidro Consunji at South Forbes Park with Premise SC 200 (a revolutionary German termiticide) and it is still termite-free up to the present based on the inspection report of 3A Pest Management. The heavy infestation was detected at the ground floor guestroom.

Mr. Consunji is the President of DMCI Holdings, Inc., the holding company of DM Consunji, Inc. (DMCI's flagship company and construction arm) and one of the biggest construction companies in the country. They have been in the business for the last fifty (50) years. He was formerly the President of the Philippine Construction Association, the umbrella organization of construction firms in the country.

DMCI Homes is the housing subsidiary of DMCI Holdings, Inc. and they have various housing projects which include Lakeview Manors, Vista De Lago, Morning Sun, Rainbow Ridge, Spring Lane (all in Taguig), Villa Alegre (Carmona, Cavite) and Hampstead Gardens (Sta. Mesa).

The reputation and reliability of DMCI Holdings and subsidiaries are reflected in their landmark projects, which include the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), in the City of Manila and the Ayala Tower One, Pacific Plaza and Ritz Towers in Makati City.

In the United States, PREMISE SC 200 has been used in no less than one million houses and the homeowners' level of satisfaction was very high. In the Philippines, Mr. Consunji is one of the homeowners who is satisfied with the protection given by Premise from Bayer.

Seen at the photo are, from left, Mr. Adrian Sapin, General Manager, 3A Pest Management; Mr. Isidro Consunji, President, DMCI Holdings; and Mr. Bong Eugenio, Business Development Manager, Bayer ES

Premise is non-repellent unlike most of the termiticides in the market today. This means that it actually kills a large number of termites by allowing them to enter the Premise-treated soil. Dead termites can no longer invade the structure while termites repelled by repellent termiticides continue to search for gaps in the treatment thereby posing risk to structures.

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These unique features are reflected in the actual performance of PREMISE SC against all termite species, soil types, pH level and construction types. It is one of the most extensively studied termiticides in the world.

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The termite-protected home of Mr. Consunji

For more information about DMCI Homes' development, call Mike at 888-3333 local 1057.

For more information about Premise SC, visit www.nobugs.com. You can also email bong.eugeniojr@bayercropscience.com or call Bayer ES at 450-3758 / 450-3537 / 450-3575.

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Myths about home ownership

From page B11

Too small
Real Estate
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Too far !

neighborhood or I will never buy"—It is not bad to aim for the moon but you have to move one step at a time. You can start with a small home and upgrade as your career progresses. The people driving a BMW or Benz today also started with compact cars. The same analogy holds true in buying a home.

Being unprofessional and unethical—Some homebuyers would want to squeeze out every inch in a transaction. It is good to bargain but not to the extreme (like offering P1 million for a property with a fair market value of P3 million). People get offended if you give a lowball offer and for sure, you will miss the opportunity. The important thing to remember here is to achieve a win-win situation in every negotiation.

Do not make home ownership your priority—Home ownership requires a lot of preparation. It is like going to the Olympics and you would need a lot of training to do. Preparation means fixing your finances, deciding on the location, etc. If home ownership is not your priority, then you might be spending your money on things that are unnecessary.

Being afraid to negotiate—Real estate negotiations may not be for everyone. If you do not like offer and counteroffer stages, then that is one of the reasons real estate brokers are there. They will relay your offer and counteroffer and give you advice if your offer is a very low one that may only offend the seller. Do not be afraid to ask for professional help.

Take shortcuts—Some homebuyers take shortcuts when they want to buy a home. They feel that they can handle it on their own by not asking for the services of a real estate broker or a legal counsel. Most of them end up losing in the end since there can be flaws that only an experienced professional can detect.

Final Note. Whatever your situation is, you will eventually have your home. The important thing to realize is that owning one's home may not come easy and would require many years of financial preparation. Remove all those negative thoughts and start working toward our new home **now!!!**

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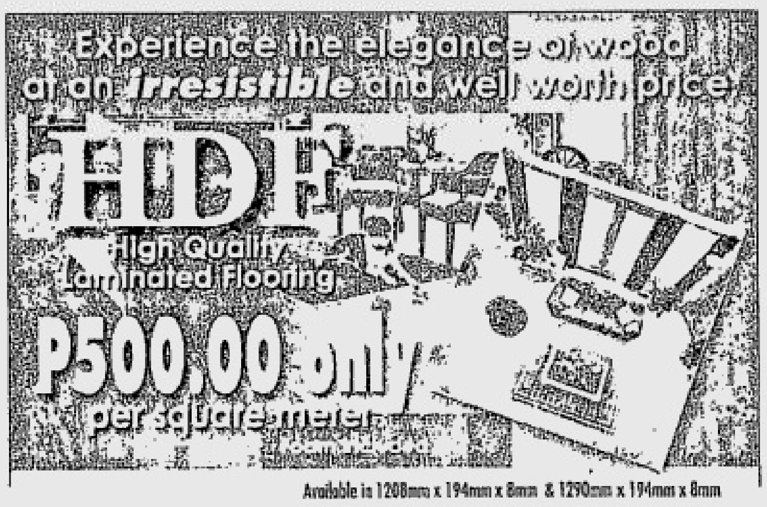
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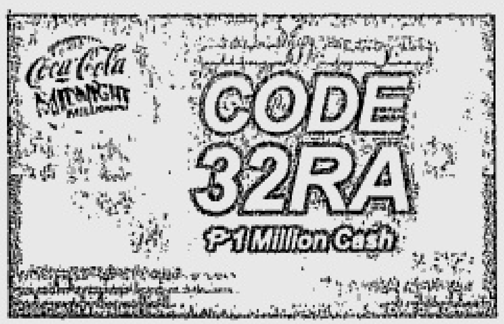

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To lose is to gain

HSBC CEO Warner Manning reduced his weight and raised funds for Children's Hour

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Rudy Esperas

REALLY, now, who says losers are miserable? One affable bloke single-handedly raised about P300,000 for charity by gladly losing over 20 pounds of flab in 11 weeks.

Warner Manning, HSBC chief executive officer-Philippines, determinedly embarked on a weight-loss program early this year to get rid of excess poundage gained during the holidays.

His weight gain was not surprising. After attending a slew of farewell parties in Brunei, his last posting, Manning arrived here last

TO LOSE/ C2

MANNING holds up one of the pledges for the Watch Warner's Weight campaign.

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"WE know who you are. You're the one who wants to lose weight for the Children's Hour."

THE HOLIDAY weight that simply had to go

To lose is to gain

From page C1

year just in time for a Filipino Christmas. A new face in town, he needed to acquaint himself with his new environ. What better way to mingle and learn the culture than to join the numerous and sumptuous yuletide activities?

There were the inevitable welcome dinners and cocktails and parties. Talk about having your cake and eating it, too—literally! "[Parties] went all the way till New Year! I've been all over Asia for 25 years, and [I have to say] Filipinos love to eat the most," Manning says.

By January, the 6-ft British CEO had ballooned to 211 pounds. Ideally, he should weigh about 170 pounds. He never had to lose that much weight in his entire life, he says. A few pounds trimmed off here and there usually did the trick. But that was then, and this was now.

Spice it up

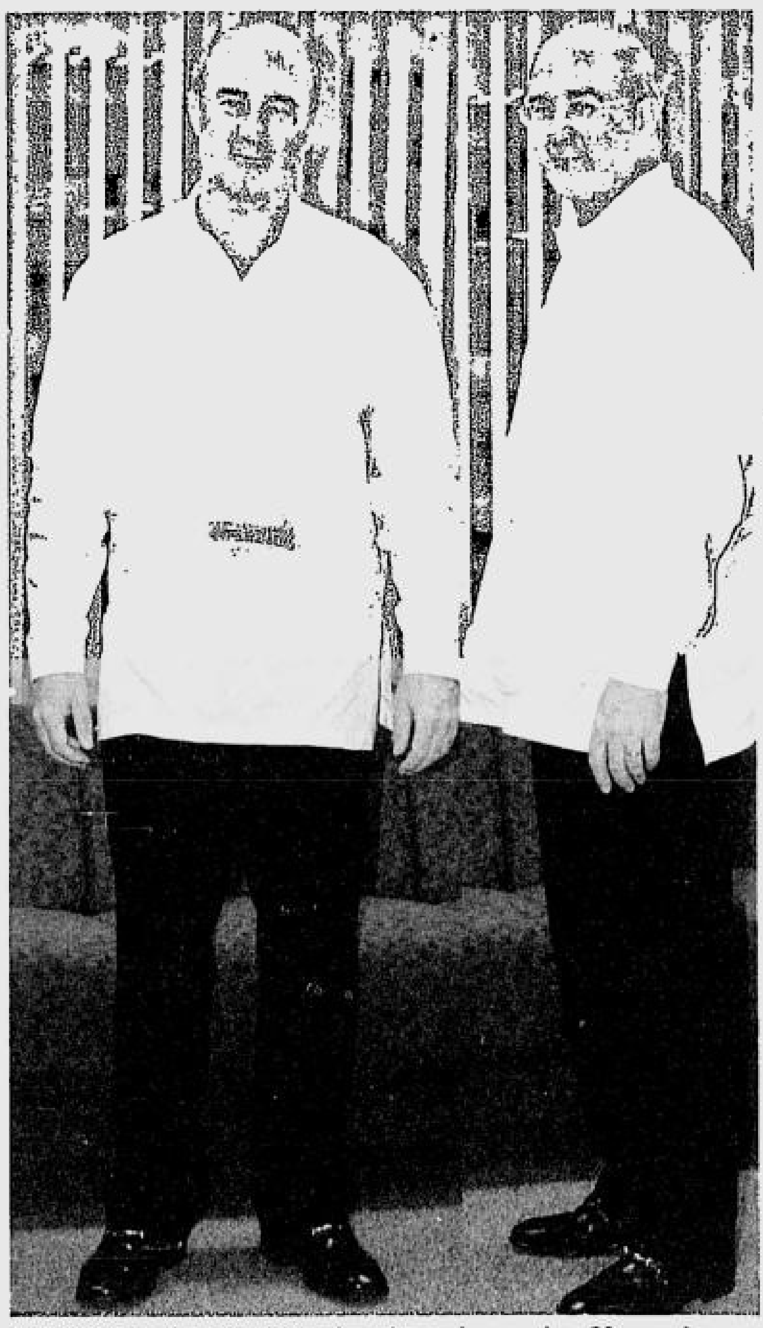
Manning needed to spice up his personal weight-loss program, so to speak. He and the HSBC corporate relations team came up with the "Watch Warner's Weight" fund-raising campaign for the Children's Hour.

"Children's Hour provides money to a lot of different charities for children. My wife is working for one of them so it was one way of doing something to support her activity," he says.

The mechanics were simple. People pledged to donate money for every pound Manning lost. Donors redeemed their pledges if, and only if, Manning lost at least 20 pounds on or before the target date. If he failed to meet one of the conditions, he would have to give to Children's Hour the equivalent of the total amount of pledges—P300,000.

The Tower Club on Ayala Avenue did the official weigh-in and issued a certificate stating his weight before the weight-loss program began. Manning was not only determined to lose weight but was also committed to raise funds for Children's Hour.

He mentioned his campaign in his corporate speeches, handed donation forms around lunch tables and introduced himself and his cause to just about everyone he met. He went around carrying pledge forms.



MANNING today—healthier, happier and more than 20 pounds lighter

Pledges ranged from P10 to P100 per pound. Some donors boldly went for P1,000/pound, probably deciding, after one good look at Manning that he won't make it. In fact, Manning says, that was what drew people to the campaign.

"People thought they would never have to pay," Manning recalls.

Rigid discipline

The tough part was curbing his food cravings and, yes, exercising regularly. But exercise he did at his home gym from 6-7:30 a.m. and for another hour at a gym near his office before heading home evenings. Exercising twice a day became his daily routine except Sundays, when he played golf.

Manning ate mostly fruits, vegetables and fish. Occasionally, he would have chicken—sans the skin, of course. He made several diet adjustments, especially since he had a weakness for savory stuff like gourmet cheeses, canapés and nuts (garlic rice, *lechon*, chicken *adobo*, *lechon kawali* and *inihaw* are among his favorite Filipino dishes).

Luckily for him, his wife Julie is knowledgeable in nutrition. After drawing up his daily menus, she strictly supervised all meals prepared for him by their chef who was also aware of Manning's need to diet. A special meal had to be prepared for the bank executive every time the Mannings entertained at home.

"My guests could have really rich, creamy, chocolate-y, nutty dessert and I would have some fruit," he says.

The hardest part, though, was feeling incredibly hungry after meal. "The trick about dieting is knowing you're going to be hungry for [about] 10 minutes [after a meal]. If you can wait out those 10 minutes, you will be able to diet."

Manning says eating will only make the body want more food. "But if you stop thinking about food and drink a glass of water, the hunger pangs will go away."

"BY THE TIME I go home in the evening, I've had nothing but fruits, vegetables and two workouts... The protein I get mostly from fish or skinless chicken."

Manning had promised to give at least 10 percent of the total amount of pledges he received if he succeeded in losing weight. By the eleventh week, he had lost more than 20 pounds. Pleased with the result, he raised his personal donation to the Children's Hour.

In barely a year in Manila, Manning has also inspired his staff to get involved in volunteeerism by leading the way. More than 50 percent of HSBC employees participated in his campaign, and volunteers from the company to various community projects have increased. "This is all about HSBC giving money back to the community."

Today, he keeps the fat at bay by playing golf and working out thrice a week. Doesn't he miss regular food?

"No, I don't. I'm okay," softly chuckling over his less-than-firm reply.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

The feeling of immortality

"When you say you fear death, you are really saying that you fear you have not lived your true life. This fear cloaks the world in silent suffering."—**David Viscott**

IT is said that "the ultimate boundary to human life is death," and that any man or woman's pursuit is to go past that boundary.

Obviously, our bodies are mortal, subject to illness, aging, pain and death. And there isn't a time when that fact is made more clear to us than when we are sick.

One often wishes for the illness to go away or to find a cure to ward off the sickness. But the process of healing redeems our helplessness through the realization that our bodies do get well with the right amount of care and rest.

Moments of immortality

It was the poet Tennyson, writing about his youthful experiences, who said that he "seemed to dissolve and melt away into boundless being... when death was almost a laughable impossibility."

In the scientific world, such feelings are never described as religious. However, many people have had a glimpse of timelessness through everyday experiences (such as beholding a glorious sunset or going through a near-death event).

There are two worlds we live in. The first is one of action and activity; the second, of peace and joy. The intriguing point in all of this is that both worlds are inside ourselves. Body and mind, when fused, connect with the spirit.

Therefore, as Dr. Deepak Chopra says, "finding this world within ourselves and experiencing it, even for a moment, could have a profound effect on the process of sickness and aging, if not death."

Finding your being

Would you like to awaken to a new you? A new existence? You can experience immortality, the ability to suspend time. Here's how to do it:

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

- Isolate yourself. Remove all distractions—people, phones, work, etc.—from your sight.
- Insulate yourself from all judgment, fear and anger.
- Find a moment of quiet.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe in slow rhythmic motions. Inhale in five counts, hold in three counts, exhale in five. Do this until you lose consciousness of your counting.
- Go with the flow. Do not judge what you see or feel. Let it pass.
- Affirm silently: "I am one with my soul and one with my being."

Ayurveda for long life

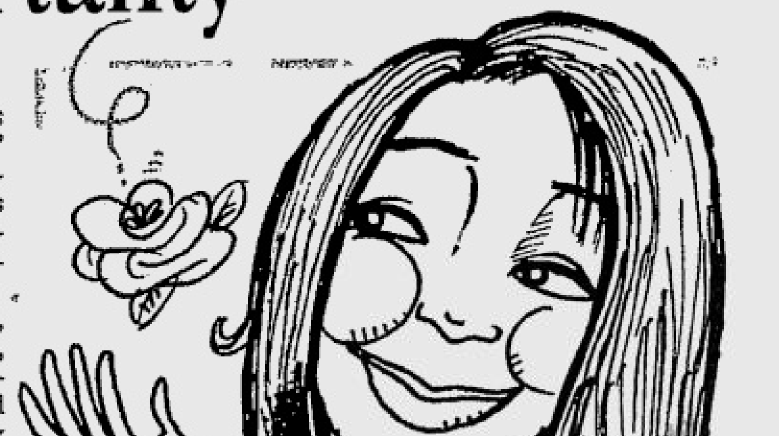
In India, longevity is a science. Through ayurveda (traditional medicine), one studies the knowledge (*ayus*) of life (*veda*).

Prana or the life energy is channeled through a "wind" known as *vata*, which is held responsible for bodily functions such as speech and memory, digestion, circulation and excretion.

When it is out of balance, symptoms appear, like insomnia, depression, dry skin and wrinkles, intolerance to stress and cold, fatigue, constipation, weak or irregular heartbeat and a low immune system.

Finding your *vata* balance can be done through certain qualities. Have regular habits and consistent bedtimes, productive work and warm or well-cooked food. Avoid cold drinks and alcohol. Go for rich, nourishing foods in cold weather. Nurture emotions, rest and relaxation time, stable relationships, a good home and work life. Indulge in some gentle massage with warm oil.

Aromatherapy with scents that are warm and grounding can also help. Try wintergreen, sandalwood, camphor, cinnamon, basil, orange, clove and rose geranium.



Cook food with herbs and spices like ginger, black pepper, turmeric, cayenne, cinnamon, mustard, mint, horseradish, cumin, nutmeg, oregano, rosemary, sage, thyme, fennel, green coriander.

Soothing body scrub:

Mix three drops of any of the above recommended aromatherapy oils (sandalwood, basil, etc.) in 15 drops carrier oil of almond or coco virgin oil. Add 3 tbsp of brown sugar and rub throughout your body. If you scrub your face, do so gently, and only for 20 seconds. Rinse in warm water. Keep warm.

I end with the philosopher Viscott's challenge: "Value the moment, act on it and live in it."

Love and light!

How exercise can lower your risk of heart disease

From page C4

Anti-clotting effect

Regular exercise has an anti-clotting effect similar to aspirin therapy. Research indicates that you don't have to do much exercise to achieve this health benefit; you just have to do it regularly.

It could be something as simple as walking at a low intensity for 15 minutes daily. The wonderful news is that this anti-clotting benefit occurs even if you don't lose weight.

However, La Forge warns that if you are on anti-coagulant medication, this doesn't mean you should throw out your pills and do only exercise.

Check with your doctor because if your blood is unusually thick, you could be at risk of a heart attack or stroke if you missed even one session of exercise.

Reduced inflammation-related protein

People who have high levels of C-reactive protein (CRP) have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

CRP is a protein that is an indicator of inflammation in the body. Recent studies have found that inflammation in the blood vessels is twice as likely as high cholesterol to lead to heart attack. This means you could have normal cholesterol but still be at risk for heart disease if you have high CRP.

Exercise helps to lower CRP levels (so do diet, cholesterol-lowering drugs and aspirin). A 2002 Cooper Institute study found that the fitter the person, the lower the level of CRP.

Reduced visceral fat

Visceral fat is fat that is located deep inside the abdominal cavity surrounding the internal organs. It is not the same as subcutaneous fat or the fat that is directly under the skin, which is locally known as *bilbil*.

Subcutaneous fat is soft and can easily be felt when you pinch the skin. Visceral fat is located so deep within that even relatively slim people can have an excess and not know it. The only way to find out how much visceral fat you have is with a CAT scan or MRI.

Visceral fat can increase the risk of heart disease, insulin resistance, type-2 diabetes and strokes in middle age.

One possible reason could be that unlike subcutaneous fat cells, visceral fat can release fatty acids even when the body does not need them for energy, so the fatty acids are less likely to be burned and remain in the blood.

Another possible reason is that visceral fat cells release inflammatory molecules that damage blood vessels.

Whatever the reason, exercise can reduce visceral fat even if you don't lose much weight. In a study of overweight postmenopausal women who exercised regularly (35-45 minutes of brisk walking five days a week) for one year, the subjects only lost 3 pounds (because they were told not to change their diet) but lost 3.4-6.9 percent of their visceral fat.

Lead researcher Anne McTiernan says visceral fat seems to be the first kind of fat that is lost through exercise, and may explain why some people who begin an exercise program observe that their pants fit better even if they haven't lost any weight.

Interestingly, sumo wrestlers have a lower incidence of type-2 diabetes compared to sedentary obese people. This is because their size is mainly due to subcutaneous fat. They don't have much visceral fat since they do several hours of exercise a day.

Lower risk of sudden heart attack

Regular exercise lowers your risk of sudden cardiac death in situations when you have to exert a large amount of physical force like lifting heavy luggage or having to run after a train or bus.

A 1998 study presented at a meeting of the American Heart Association found that there was an "inverse relationship" between the risk of dying of exertion-related heart attack and the frequency of regular workout sessions.

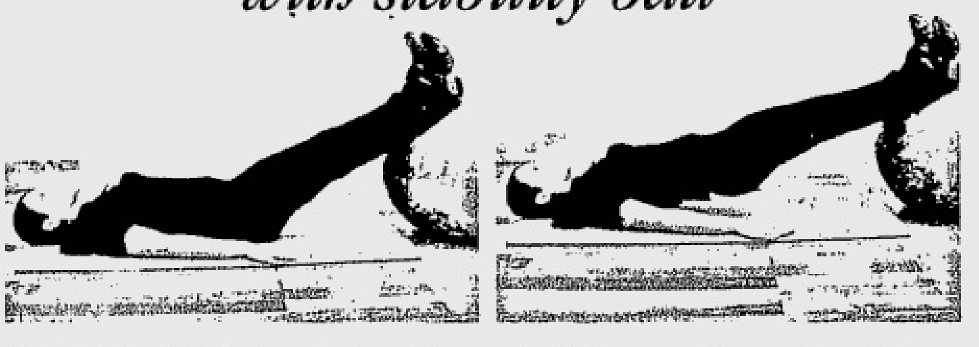
The men who exercised the most (five times a week) had the least risk, while the men who didn't exercise at all had the greatest risk (followed by the men who exercised only once a week).

No wonder, then, that actor James Cagney has been quoted as saying that he tried to dance at least once a day because he didn't want to "take his heart by surprise."

For past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.info; for suggestions for future columns, e-mail me at fitness@attglobal.net.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Straight leg bridge on floor with stability ball



STRENGTHENS buttocks and hamstrings (back of the thighs); challenges core muscles.

Equipment:

Stability ball and exercise mat. As a substitute for the ball, you can use a sturdy chair or bed.

Exercise technique:

1. Lie down on the mat with your legs straight and your heels on top of the ball.
2. Press down on the ball with your heels and lift your hips.
3. Slowly lower down to starting position.
4. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you lift your hips; inhale as you lower.
2. To make the exercise easier, place the ball under your calves.
3. Focus on keeping both hipbones level as you lift and lower.

Repetitions:

You have two options for doing this exercise:

a. Keep your hips lifted for 10 seconds (do not hold your breath; continue to breathe as you hold the position). Do three to five repetitions.

b. Lift and lower for 10 repetitions.

Beauty and health company honors its top executives

NU SKIN Philippines Inc will hold its Success Seminar with the theme "Cruisin' to the Top" on Nov. 13, 6 p.m., at the Music Museum in Greenhills, San Juan. Witness the awarding of Nu Skin's top executives who have attained noteworthy accomplishments for the third quarter and have greatly contributed to the company's steady growth. Awardees will share their success stories and how Nu Skin helped improve the quality of their lives.

Success Seminar tickets are available at all Nu Skin Walk-in Centers, priced at P150 for distributors and P50 for guests. The tickets will also be honored as entry passes to the Pharmanex Health forum, an enriching event featuring Nu Skin & Pharmanex products such as Cortitrol, Clear Action, Tegreen and Perennial.

Call 6890333.

Survival classes for pregnant women

ANMUM, the most recommended milk for pregnant women that's formulated to help in babies' brain development, regularly conducts Mother's Survival Classes.

Classes are held at St. Luke's Medical Center, Manila Doctors Hospital, Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center, Perpetual Help Medical Center, Bulacan Provincial Hospital, Calamba Doctors Hospital, St. Paul's Hospital in Iloilo, Riverside Medical City in Bacolod, Well Family Clinic and St. Anthony Mother and Child Hospital in Cebu.

The classes tackle topics such as pre-natal care, nutrition during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and post-partum exercises. The discussions are facilitated by distinguished speakers from each hospital.

There are also interactive games, fun activities and giveaways.

During this event, Anmum also has a special booth dedicated for the Anmum Club. Through this booth, class participants may submit applications to join Anmum's exclusive club for pregnant women. New members will automatically receive their initial membership gift packs as soon as they submit the correct number of Anmum sachet foils and/or scoop tips with the accomplished application form.

On the other hand, existing members of the Anmum Club may avail of great gift items through the Anmum Club's Great Expectations Rewards Program. All they have to do is collect Anmum sachet foils and/or scoop tips so they can earn "baby points," which can be exchanged for redemption items.

CARDIOVASCULAR FITNESS, ANYONE?

Jorge A. Sison, MD, FPCP, FPCC
Research Coordinator, Council on Hypertension, Philippine Heart Association
Consultant in Cardiology, Medical Center Manila & St. Luke's Medical Center

It is everyone's dream to stay healthy and live longer and the passport to achieving this is to stay fit. Cardiovascular fitness, to be more specific, is defined as the state of appropriateness and healthiness of the heart and blood vessels to maintain life and physical well being. Avoiding the proverbial coronary risk factors like smoking, overweight, hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol and sedentary lifestyle is well accepted but the question is – how knowledgeable are we? The best way to stay fit is through "diet and exercise". Maintaining ideal body weight and sufficient physical activity are the keys to cardiovascular fitness.

Crash diet: A "yoyo" weight reducing program

Losing weight is an added boost to good health. Most dieters, however, end up with failing grades. Losing weight is not as simple as skipping one or two meals a day to get rapid results, otherwise known as the "crash diet" technique. The body is a dynamic but automatic machine that churns and burns fuels from food to produce energy. Skipping meals will create a negative feedback mechanism in the cells to slow down metabolism. In effect, the body will accumulate fats and in exchange, will tap the muscle protein to provide those needed ATP's for energy. The net effect of crash dieting is weight loss BUT due to muscle protein loss, visceral fats accumulate within. While the lost pounds make crash dieters temporarily happy, the long term result is greater and more rapid weight gain due to the accumulated fats and rebound appetite. When the desire to lose weight again arises, the "crash diet" is again done and the vicious cycle continues, thus, the "yoyo" effect.

Proper way to lose weight is through balanced nutrition & adequate water intake

Dieting without proper nutritional support causes muscle loss and increased body fat making it more difficult to lose weight in the future. One has to consume 3,500 calories to gain 1 pound and likewise, one has to burn 3,500 calories to lose a pound. Together with exercise, losing extra pounds should be done through intake of less carbohydrates and fats and more of fibers with adequate protein, particularly from vegetable sources like soy. In addition, one has to drink six to eight 8-oz. glasses of water a day to help flush away the waste and toxins from the body.

Let's exercise to life, not to our demise

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine recommend an increase in professional and public awareness of the health benefits associated with daily physical activity, even of moderate intensity. However, more intense and vigorous activities are likely to provide additional benefits, according to them and this is best done through exercise training. Ideally, medical evaluation should be obtained before entry into an exercise training program. Exercise testing should be routine for persons with risk factors, known or suspected cardiovascular disease before beginning an exercise program. Those with cardiac disease should be medically supervised.

Exercise can either be beneficial or risky

Exercise has both risks and benefits and our aim is to minimize risks and maximize benefits. Of the many factors that affect exercise risk, the 3 most important are age, presence of heart disease and intensity of exercise. Those above 40 or with heart disease should undergo medical evaluation first and a prescribed exercise program should be followed. In the absence of screening, intense exercise such as jogging among healthy and cardiac patients is associated with greater incidence of sudden cardiac arrest compared with other activities. On the other hand, proper implementation of exercise programs and prescriptions of any intensity, cause reduced mortality compared to sedentary groups.

Determine your risk classification and learn to avoid pitfalls

Determining your risk classification is a sure guide to know the most appropriate exercise training suited for you. You belong to Class A (Apparently Healthy Individuals) if you are asymptomatic with no known heart disease. Activity guidelines require no restrictions except for medical evaluation if you are a >45 year-old male or a >55 year-old female. Individuals with known cardiac disease but stable (Class B- low risk with vigorous exercise, Class C- moderate to high risk) would require medical evaluation, ECG, stress testing and BP monitoring. Class D individuals have unstable disease with activity restriction.

Cardiovascular fitness is everyone's desire. We all aim to prevent than to treat a disease as it affords better outcome and cost effectiveness. After modifying the coronary risk factors, our mission in life is to stay healthy and disease-free; and our vision is longevity and good quality of life. Let's stay fit, not fat. Let's diet and exercise to that!

PHA can be reached at *hhouse@mydestiny.net*
or *secretariat@philheart.org*
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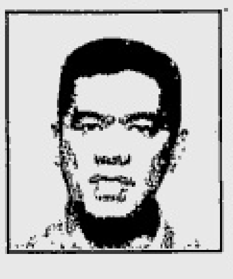
FAQs (frequently asked questions)

My family is migrating abroad by next month. Because of this, we intend to end our MEDICard membership before our policies' expiry date. Are we still entitled for a refund on the membership fees we paid?

We apply a prorated refund scheme for family and individual members that opt to end their contract prior to its expiry. However, such is allowed ONLY for reasons that are considered to be valid. The refund is also subject to your medical claims made. For more detailed information on this, you may call our Revenue Management Department at 867-8180.

Meet your MEDICard Team



Dr. Ronald Arellano Vallar recently joined MEDICard's team of medical service providers. Dr. Vallar, who is based at St. Luke's Medical Center, specializes in Internal Medicine. He was conferred Doctor of Medicine at Far Eastern University and finished his Internist residency at the Metropolitan Hospital. He also subspecializes in Gastroenterology. Dr. Vallar is a Fellow of the Philippine College of Physicians. the Philippine Society of Gastroenterology and the Philippine Society of Digestive Endoscopy. Visit his clinic at the Medical Arts Bldg. for your consultation needs at Room 439 Mondays to Saturdays, from 9 AM to 12 noon.

Dr. Manuela Tibay-De Jesus has been practicing her profession for over 20 years now. Fondly called Doc Mila, she finished her degree in Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas and her residency training for her specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the UST Hospital. Dr. De Jesus is a Life Member and Fellow of the Philippine Obstetrics and Gynecological Society. Members may visit Dr. Mila for their OB-Gynecological needs at Room 5009, Medical Arts Bldg. of the UST Hospital from Mondays to Thursdays, 11 AM 'til 3 in the afternoon.

Meet MEDICard accredited dentist **Dr. Dulce Moreno-Otamias.** Doc Dulce, a graduate of Centro Escolar University, joined MEDICard in 1997. She specializes in Orthodontics and is an active member of the Manila Dental Society and the Academy of Orthodontics. Visit her for your needed dental services at her clinic. 1398 S.H. Loyola St., Sampaloc, Manila. She holds clinic from Mondays to Saturdays, 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM and on Sundays 9 AM to 5 in the afternoon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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How exercise can lower your risk of heart disease

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

PEOPLE often ask, "If I start exercising, when I will see results?"

The "results" they are talking about are usually on the outside of the body—weight loss, inch loss and improved muscle tone. Numerous surveys have shown that appearance is the No. 1 reason people begin an exercise program.

There is nothing wrong if vanity is your main motivation to work out. Exercise can certainly improve the way your body looks, but looking good is just scratching the surface of what exercise can really do for you. The real benefits of exercise happen on the inside.

Health doesn't have anything to do with appearance. Being fit and healthy does not mean having the "perfect" body or losing substantial amounts of weight.

The benefits I am talking about have to do with internal changes, like improved cholesterol and triglyceride levels, blood pressure, bone density, digestion and a reduction in stress and anxiety levels. These benefits can occur even if you don't lose weight.

In today's column, I will concentrate on how exercise, specifically aerobic exercise, can help to lower your risk of heart disease.

Of course, exercise is only part of an overall program to keep your heart healthy. The other components are diet, stress reduction and the appropriate medication when necessary.

Aerobic exercise

The word "aerobics" has become synonymous with Jane Fonda, who popularized aerobic dancing in the early '80s.

But it was actually Dr. Kenneth Cooper who first used the term in conjunction with exercise.

> It can certainly improve your looks, but looking good is just scratching the surface of what exercise can really do for you

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Aerobic exercise is any exercise that uses the large muscles of the body (arms and legs) in a continuous rhythmic fashion for at least 15-20 minutes. Examples are walking, jogging, running, dancing, cycling, etc.

Sports like tennis, badminton, soccer and basketball are usually a combination of aerobic and anaerobic (short spurts of activity) exercises, but can be considered as part of the aerobic conditioning component of an exercise program.

To get heart disease prevention benefits, scientists have determined that you need a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise most days of the week.

The "exercise" can also be physical activity that uses most of your muscles, like gardening and house cleaning. Thirty minutes is a minimum, and some scientists say 60 minutes is the goal to shoot for.

Stronger heart

Exercise makes the heart stronger and more efficient so it can pump more blood with each beat. This lowers the resting heart rate, since the heart does not have to beat as fast anymore.

This may prolong your life. A long-term study involving 34,000 people indicates that a higher-than-normal resting heart rate is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and even some cancers.

More flexible blood vessels

Exercise also helps to make blood vessels more flexible and increases their diameter probably by increasing nitric oxide levels.

Nitric oxide is a blood compound that keeps blood vessels clear and helps them to dilate. In one exercise study, nitric oxide levels rose by 28 percent. Nitric oxide also helps to prevent platelets and other inflammatory substances from sticking to the blood vessel walls.

Lower blood pressure

Scientists are not sure exactly why exercise can lower blood pressure, but the latest research shows that a single session of moderate intensity exercise can lower systolic blood pressure (the higher number in your blood pressure reading) by 18-20 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure (the lower reading) by 7-9 mmHg.

These changes remain for 12-16 hours after the exercise.

According to endocrinologist Ralph La Forge, there is no pill that will give you the same effect, but this doesn't mean you should stop taking hypertensive medication since very few people can exercise every 12 hours.

In some cases, exercise and diet alone are enough to keep high blood pressure under control. In other cases, medication is necessary. Only your doctor can tell you for sure. Exercise has the greatest effect in lowering blood pressure after six months of regular workouts.

La Forge says there is strong evidence that low-intensity exercise is also beneficial at lowering blood pressure, and that exercising at high-intensity levels does not appear to provide additional benefit to blood pressure reduction.

Improved cholesterol profile

To find out if exercise alone could improve cholesterol readings without weight loss, cardiologist William Kraus of Duke University adjusted the diets of obese subjects so they could maintain their weight while on a three-month program of aerobic exercise.

The subjects lowered their LDL or "bad" cholesterol from 122-104 and raised their HDL or "good" cholesterol from 32-37.

The rise in HDL may not seem that dramatic, but it has been calculated that for every one-point increase in HDL, the risk of heart disease is lowered in women by 3 percent and in men by 2 percent.

Forty-five minutes of moderate- to high-intensity exercise will do the trick in helping raise HDL cholesterol levels.

Decreased triglycerides

After a large meal high in saturated fat or high in refined carbohydrates, large amounts of triglycerides are released into the bloodstream.

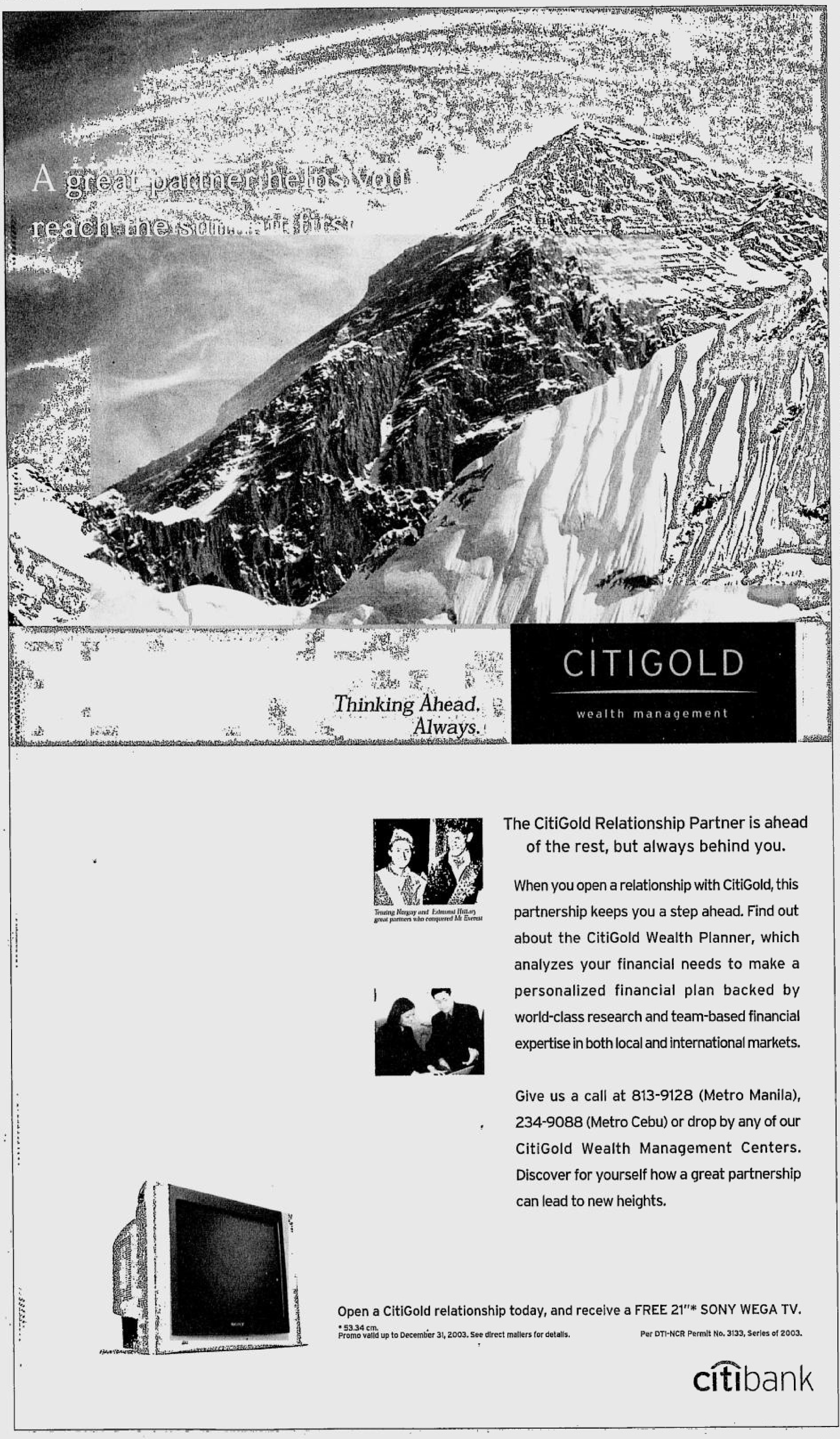
If these kinds of meals are part of the daily diet, the high triglyceride levels make the blood "stickier" and the arteries less flexible.

High triglycerides also promote the formation of lesions in the artery walls where LDL cholesterol can accumulate and form a hard plaque. To make matters worse, high triglycerides also lower HDL or good cholesterol.

The good news is, a single session of 30-60 minutes of moderate- to high-intensity exercise can lower triglyceride levels in the blood by 15-40 percent, and the effects last about 36-48 hours.

Scientists believe that exercise increases an enzyme that breaks down triglycerides so it can be processed by the liver. Of course, exercise should not be an excuse to eat all the saturated fat or refined carbohydrates you want, because you will always be able to eat more than you can exercise.

HOW/ C3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Saving lives closer to home

By Gibbs Cadiz

World-class technology for living donor liver transplants is now available in Asia, thanks to Singapore's pioneering Gleneagles Hospital

IN MAY last year, the biggest news in the Philippines was, naturally, political. Former president Joseph Estrada had fired his battery of lawyers a few weeks earlier, claiming inability to get justice from the courts, and the air was still rife with uncertainty.

Elsewhere in the world, the biggest headline was also political. Exasperated at a string of suicide attacks, Israel continued its incursions into the Ramallah compound of Palestinian Authority chair Yasser Arafat, reducing the grizzled leader to a press conference by candlelight.

But in Singapore, that tiny enclave of First World cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia, the populace was glued to more gripping news.

Popular TV host Andrea De Cruz had undergone a risky liver transplant after a near-fatal dose of Slim 10 diet pills. The gallant donor? Her fiance, equally popular star Pierre Png, who gave away half of his liver to save his beloved.

SAVING/ D4

CELEBRITY couple Andrea De Cruz and Pierre Png meet the press after the risky operation where Png donated half of his liver to De Cruz, who nearly died from diet pills

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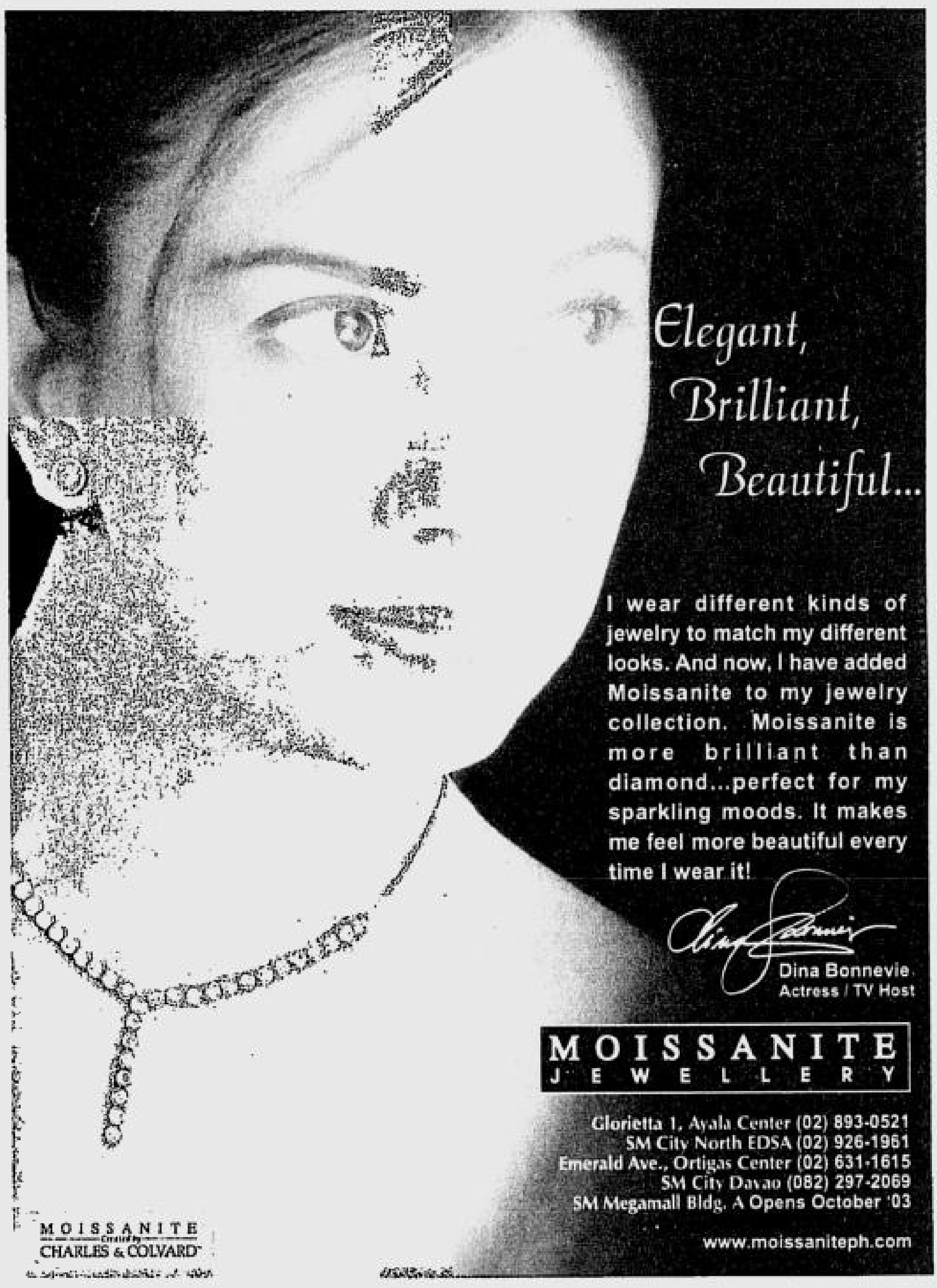

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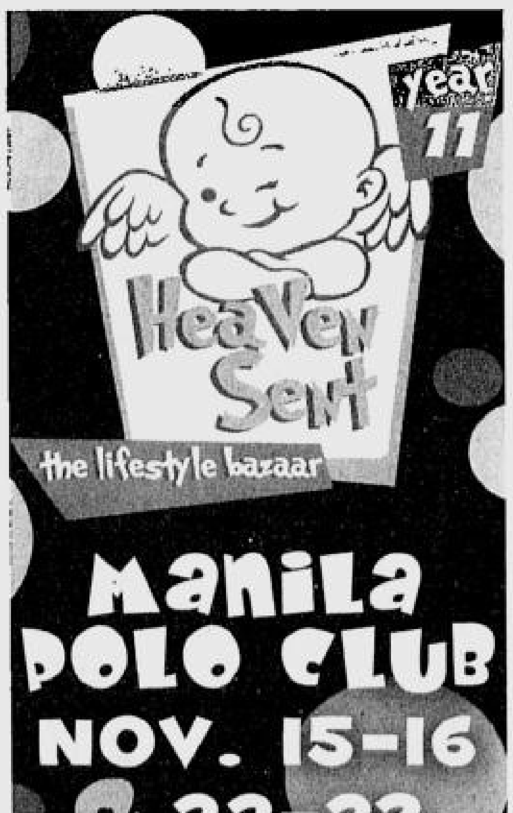

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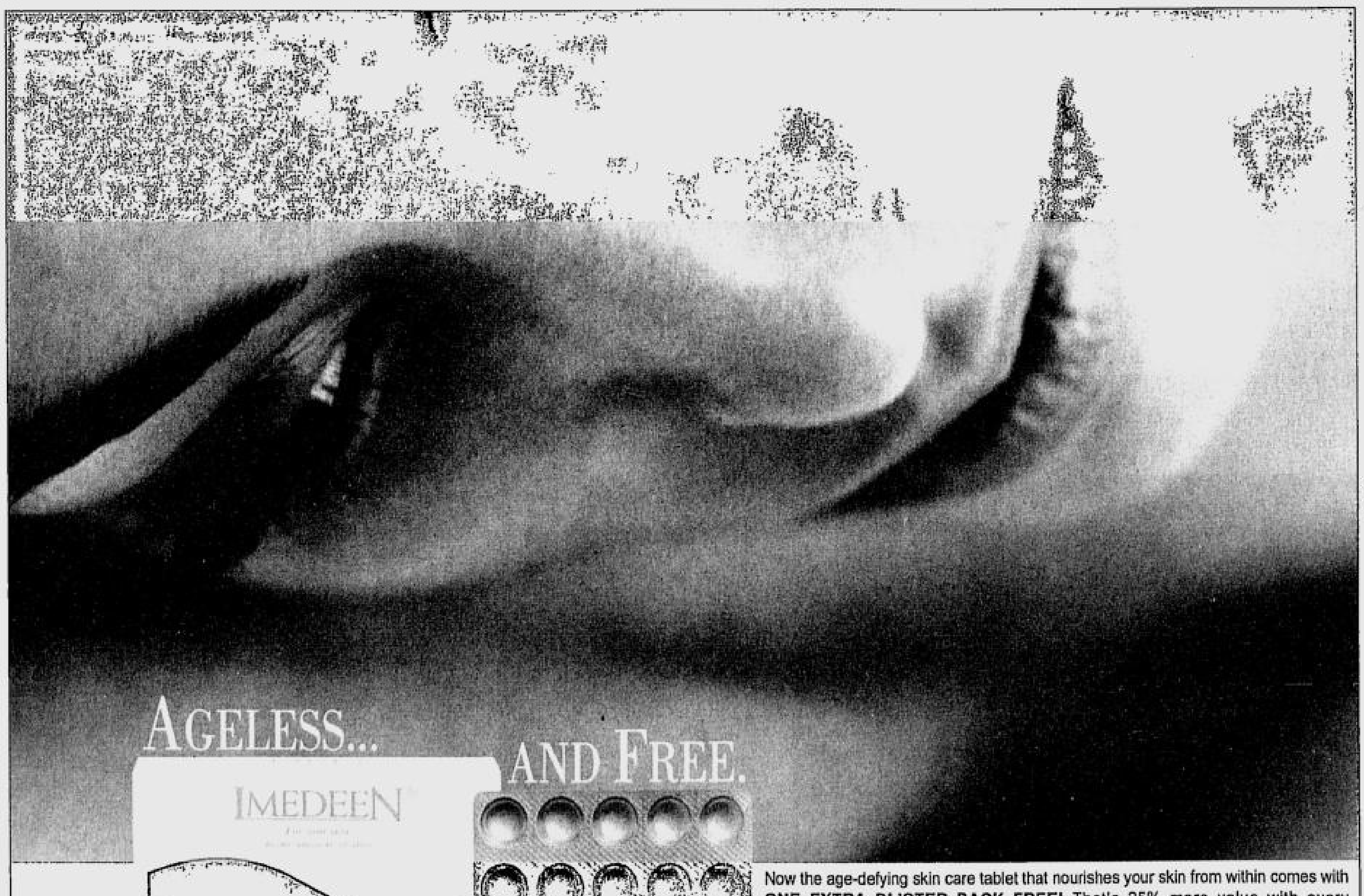

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BUSINESS magnate Antonio Martel Jr. with his wife, the birthday lady, Belen Lovina Ticzon Martel

THE YOUNG Ticzon babes. Marc Llamas with Antonia T. Martel, Rachelle T. Clemente, Suzanne R. Clemente, Jacklyn T. Clemente and Matthias Koppe

THE FUN PACK. (seated) Irene M. Francisco and Ado Escudero; (standing) Dr. Randy Francisco, Benny T. Clemente and Bombit de la Peña

LOREN and Joel Juico with Evelyn Cabacungan and architect Danny Bonifacio

Birthday blast for a mall queen

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

IN TOWN for, among other things, a fun dinner-dance to celebrate her birthday was **Belen Lovina Ticzon-Martel**, executive vice president of Harrison Plaza and chair of Belco Marketing Inc., *palanggas*.

Also with her was her only daughter, **Antonia**, who was enjoying summer vacation before her sophomore year as a scholar at the illustrious Jesuit-run Fordham University in Lincoln Center, Manhattan.

The bash, held at the Bahia Restaurant atop Hotel InterCon, also gave her husband, Harrison Plaza president **Antonio V. Martel Jr.** , a chance to catch up on some coffee-shop chitchat with his pals.

Top party favorite **Lady Valerie** and her orchestra played great dance music and provided the guests with the best excuse to burn off the rich calories from the yummy and sinful dinner.

Aside from the ballroom dancing, actor-singer **Raymond Lauchengco** also rendered songs. Even some invitees belted out a few tunes to toast the celebrator—among them **Evangeline Pascual, Viring Ongkeko, Myrna Borromeo** and **Bebot Teves Laurel.**

Present were **Henry Martel** and brother **Charlie**, with his tall and attractive Dutch wife **Ethelka**; top cardiologist Dr. **Randy Francisco** with wife **Irene Martel-Francisco** and daughter **Isabel**; Belco marketing executives **Benny** and **Ophie Clemente** with daughters **Chinkee, Rachelle** and **Suzanne**; eligible bachelors **Erik Martel** and C! magazine top gent **Paolo Martel; Juliet Ticzon;** cozy twosome **Ina Ticzon** and basketball legend **Bogs Adornado; Mon** and **Tia Santos** with their kids, **Raphael, Pauline** and **Gabe; Romeo Ticzon Jr.** and his children, **Rosanna, Arlene, Vincent, Adolf** and **Julius; Troy** and **Lisa Ticzon** with their heirs, **Raymond, Luisa** and **Lala; Ding** and **Irma Lovina; Cora Ticzon; Abet Ticzon; Remedios T. Gonzales,** plus so many others.

Also on hand to greet Belen was the staff of Harrison Plaza headed by mall manager **Cesar Olegario,** natch!

After the toasts, we all wished the Martels a safe trip back to New York, from where the family will be jetting next to Paris for their annual pilgrimage.

For Thanksgiving, the Martels plan to spend the holidays at their Vancouver, Canada, vacation home, located downtown close to Stanley Park. Well, now you know, *palanggas.*

Harrison Plaza's Belen Martel added another year to her life with fabulous food, dancing and merriment

Spotting them

The last weekend was just too much fun. Once most everyone finished visiting his or her dear departed, it was time to party!

Halloween night was such a blast of gigs that *moi* wished I had several clones to attend all the happenings.

Without batting an eyelash, I'd say the InterCon's Halloween bash was the best! Prime attractions were definitely the Miss Earth beauty contestants from all over the globe.

Miss Afghanistan, would you believe, was a gorgeous sight to behold in her costume of body paint and autumn leaves? She deserved all the whistles and applause from the crowd.

InterCon's popular GM **Stefan Voogel** could have easily won the best costume prize for his fab **Jon Fernando** outfit. But classy PR gal **Jennifer Pena** gets my best vote for this super successful affair, with the help of PR whiz **Keren Pascual.**

Party standouts were **Patrick Reyno,** who came as a blonde maid with a feather duster to boot!

Celine Lopez came straight out of "Cabaret" in a winning Liza Minnelli outfit, while sultry **Maureen Santiago** looked terrific in a Cleopatra get-up.

In turn, most babes' eyes were on **Ramon Balaguer**, who was the most handsome-looking Army man in his camouflage fatigue uniform.

And at Greenbelt 3, a black-faced **Tim Yap** was lording it over the packed costumed crowd.

Best costume went to the Intestine Guy, who bagged P50,000 worth of tickets for a private screening of a movie of his choice and 50 of his guests in Greenbelt's MyCinema.

The catch was, the guy wanted cash, not tickets! And Ayala, the cool company that it is, agreed to accommodate him by converting the prize to moolah. Way to go!

Among other standouts, **Tanya Paulsen** turned heads everywhere she went. But also drawing attention were talented architect **Victor Consunji** and pretty **Chinggay Andrada,** who were so sweet to each other.

Next stop—the Tent at the Fort. It was brimming with bodies dancing, screaming, chatting, boozing and plain socializing.

This was the Cream Halloween bash, a brainchild of Big Fish's **Domini Primero** together with Smart Addict Mobile and Axe.

Needless to say, the party was a hit, and it was almost impossible to get in.

At Dream Bar, the scene was the same—bodies occupying every inch of space, so much so that the party pack spilled out all the way to Starbucks at 6750.

Boracay faces

After the wild Halloween weekend, loads of Manila's social set were seen hieing off to Boracay to rest, relax and detox.

At Fridays, those two **Antons**—Philippine Tatler's **San Diego** and architect/interior designer **Mendoza**—wasted no time getting baked under the golden Boracay sun, *palanggas.*

In a rented private house were business magnate **Iñigo Zobel** with wife, gorgeous **Maricris** , and their children, **Bianca, Natalia** and **Rocio.**

The Madrigal sisters were also around with their hubbies: **Jamby** with **Eric Valade; Tana** with dashing American movie producer **Richard Gelfand;** and **Chu-Chu with Mandy Eduque.**

Other notables included **Dondi Teehankee;** BMW stalwart **Mark Gilbert;** fun pals **Leica Carpo** and **Malu Gamboa** of El Cirkulo; **Mike** and sister **Kat Huang** with older brother **Anton Huang** and lovely wife **Nina Herrera,** with their son; handsome **Troy Montero** and **Aubrey Miles; Claudine Barretto** with hot flame **Raymart Santiago;** and, *naturellement,* **Celine Lopez** and her gang of 16!

MISS Afghanistan Vida Samadzai

WOMEN IN BLACK. Socialite Roi Philips with Mellie Ablaza, consul of Guatemala; Evie Acosta, consul of Togo, and Myrna Borromeo

RET. Gen. Charlie Martel with wife Ethelka and son

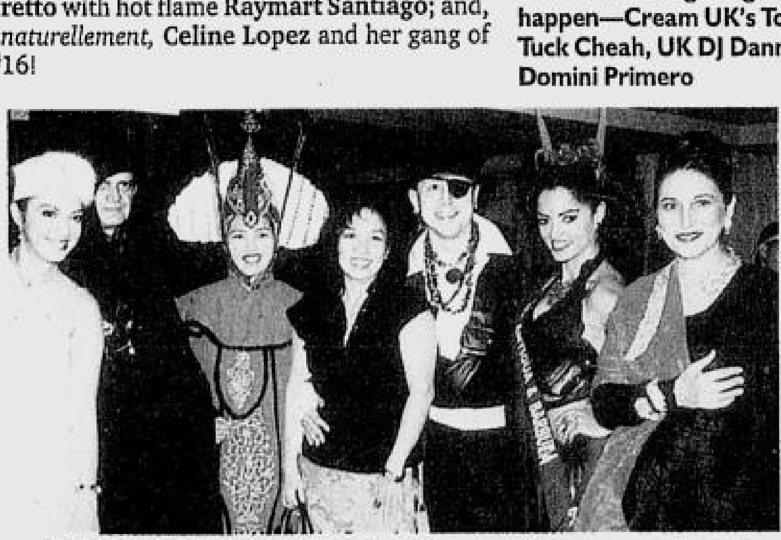
NEW York connections. Oscar Atendido, beauty queen Evangeline Pascual and dashing Robert Rockefeller

REMEDIOS T. Gonzales, Cora Ticzon and Ding Lovina

MELISSA and sister Tanya Isabel with parents Liza and Othello Ticzon

THE TENT'S big bang! The gang who made it happen—Cream UK's Tony Burton, Big Fish's Pixie and Tuck Cheah, UK DJ Danny Rampung and Big Fish's Domini Primero

THE POPULAR Absinth's swinging twosome, Morten Bremeldej and Christine San Diego


INTERCON'S Halloween hotshots: Carmela Bocanegra, sales and marketing director; Jeff Gieseke, Red Ortiz, Grace Glory Go; Stefan Voogel, InterCon GM; Ms Antigua and Barbuda Juanny Gomez and PR director Jenny Pena

ROCKING it Tent-style: Tina Tinio, Trish Cu-Unjieng, Pepper Teehankee, Patrick Reyno and Carmen Hidalgo

MODELS Luke Jickain and Bianca Valerio

MISS Canada Brooke Elizabeth Johnston and Miss Vietnam

MISS Colombia Emilia de Castro

MISS USA Jessica Kathleen Schilling

BLOODY MARY. That's Miss Sweden, Caroline Donath

HALLOWEEN queens. Miss Chile Carolina Salazar, Miss Gibraltar Justine Olivero, Miss Brazil Pricila Zandona and Miss Bosnia and Herzegovina Mirela Bulbulija

Avoiding the ESP trap

Those who are able to perform great psychic feats are not necessarily the most spiritually enlightened

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THE TORTUOUS and often lonely road to higher consciousness and spiritual enlightenment is replete with mental traps. The spiritual traveler must be able to recognize and handle them properly, or he may be thrown to the wayside, unable to move ahead.

Worse, he may get the impression that he is moving forward when, in fact, he may be sliding backwards.

One of the most common and most difficult to overcome of these obstacles is the ESP trap.

Many individuals first get attracted to the path because of the spectacular powers displayed by some people who claim to be enlightened.

The beginner is usually not aware that these are merely mental traps. Highly evolved beings do not display such powers even if they can do these easily. Only the more questionable characters love to exhibit such psychic powers.

When people begin to meditate regularly and perform the spiritual exercises such as fasting, or eating only vegetables, attuning themselves to higher spiritual goals rather than to material pursuits, certain powers begin to manifest themselves.

Some are able to read others' thoughts. Others are able to predict the future. Still others are able to heal. In certain cases, a few develop the ability to move objects or do psychometry (i.e. the ability to read the background, ownership and emotional content of objects belonging to completely unknown persons).

If pursued for their own sake and not as mere stepping stones to a realization of higher consciousness, these powers can even retard one's growth rather than advance them.

This is the reason why the great masters of esoteric wisdom, the Tibetan lamas and the Zen Buddhists, teach the beginners not to pay attention to such powers. They are not allowed to develop them, because to do so would be to detract from the main goal of spiritual enlightenment.

No good reason

I have met individuals whose main interest was how to develop their psychic powers. And when I asked them why they would like to acquire such powers, they could not give any good reason except for the fact that they would like to develop them.

A few have told me "in order to help those in need," which is a noble objective.

But what is more important than mere acquisition of a psychic ability is knowledge of one's self and how to attain spiritual enlightenment.

When I talk in this manner, many of these psychic buffs lose interest and are never heard from again. All they want is to acquire some power or ability that will impress other people or boost their own egos.

It is unfortunate that some people start out beautifully, with the objective of reaching a higher goal, only to slide backwards because they have developed a psychic ability they could capitalize on.

There is, of course, nothing basically wrong with psychic powers in themselves. These are God-given gifts which we all have in potency. Only a few, however, have bothered to actualize them.

But once manifested, their owners get trapped and could do nothing more than to display them for fun, profit or ego trip.

Such acts are a misuse of the powers, and eventually those who indulge in such things will have their days of reckoning. For no one can play around with these unseen forces with impunity.

Psychic ability is good, if used merely as a means toward a greater understanding of the spiritual world and not for mere display or mere dominance over others. Psychic ability is nothing spectacular except to the most ignorant. It is not something really extraordinary.

It is in fact the lowest form of development in the spiritual path. Those who are able to perform great psychic feats are not necessarily the most spiritually enlightened.

On the other hand, those who are spiritually enlightened are themselves endowed with great psychic abilities which they will never display or demonstrate unless for a very important reason and only under proper circumstances.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 8107245, 8926806 or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to his dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

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THE SM Activity Center brings cheers to sick kids in Baguio General Hospital.

Mall's hospital activity centers ease the plight of sick children

SM FOUNDATION has put up several Activity Centers in pediatric wards of government hospitals both in Metro Manila and the provinces.

Sick kids can now have fun while waiting for consultation in the hospitals' pediatric wards. The SM Activity Center's concept is based on a lot of interaction, specifically mother and child involvement. Moms can now take her child's temperature, height or weight while the kids are playing in the room. This way, going to the doctor becomes less traumatic for sick children.

More than that, the SM Activity Centers are designed to cheer up sick kids. They have colorful murals, fun furniture, and indoor and outdoor play equipment such as wooden trains as dividers, fruit-shaped slides, swings with basketball rings, animal-shaped seesaws and mini-houses.

Kids can play with the toys in the activity centers, or keep themselves busy with educational materials such as books, puzzles and the like.

Thus, with the activity centers' child-friendly approach, children's fears of hospitals and doctors are considerably eased.

To date, the SM Foundation has put up eight Hospital Activity Centers in government hospitals. In Metro Manila, these are located at East Avenue Medical Center in Quezon City and Rizal Medical Center in Pasig City. In the provinces, these are located at the Rural Health Unit I in Mexico, Pampanga, West Visayas State University Hospital in Iloilo City, Davao Clench Center in Davao City, and the Baguio Nutrition Council and Baguio Under Five Clinic in Baguio City.

In addition to the SM Activity Center at the East Avenue Medical Center, SM Foundation has also helped refurbish the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Hospital's Main Building.

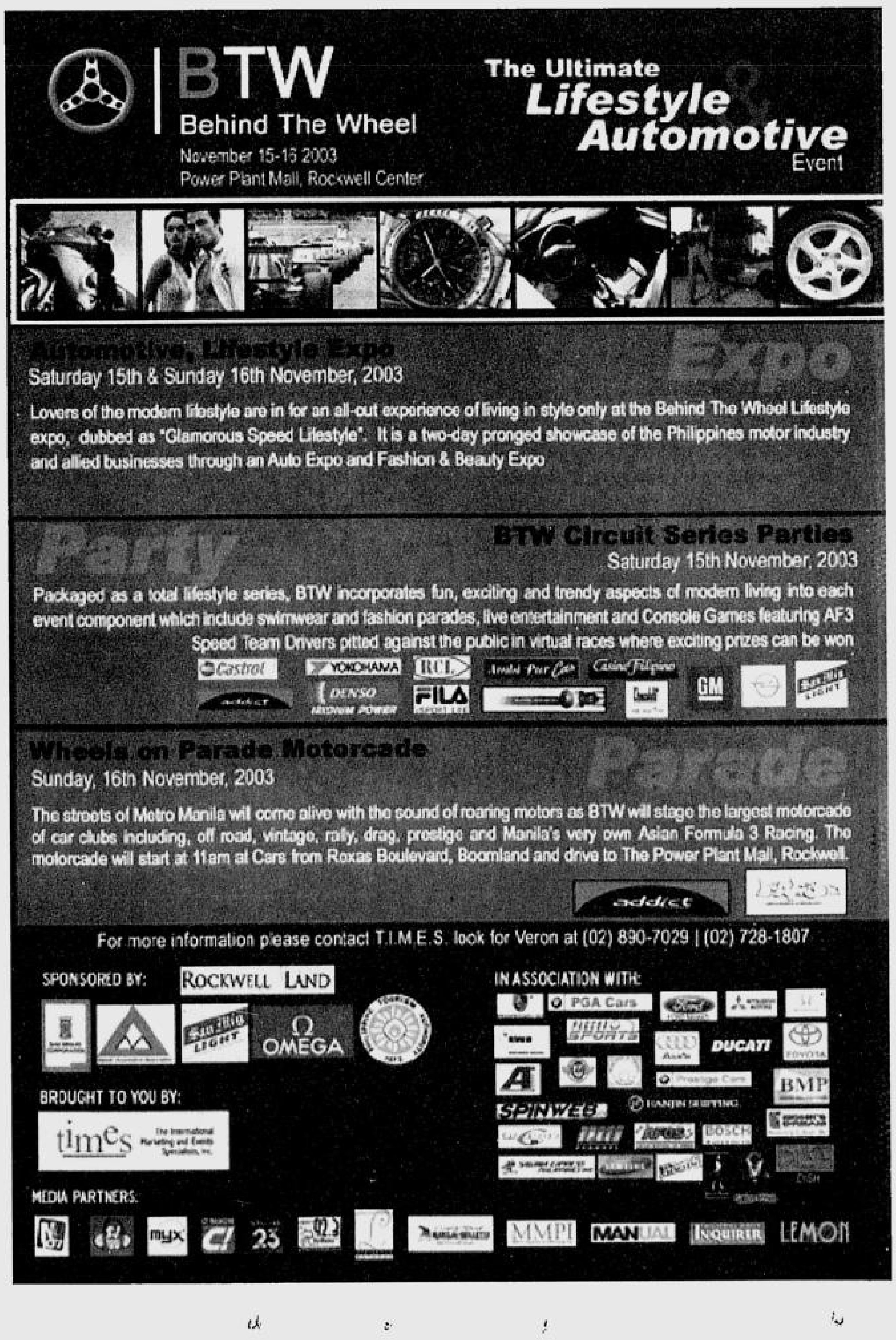
These included repainting of its admitting area, old and new intensive care units, the septic neonatal intensive care unit, and oxygen supplies and instrument cubicles. The Foundation also donated items like curtains for the areas.

At the Quezon City General Hospital, the foundation has turned over its very first Hospice Care Unit, which is designed to care for and give comfort to terminally ill patients.

It has three beds and chairs and is provided with a TV, VCD player and some reading materials. Wall-to-wall murals with landscape themes aim to provide a sense of serenity and hope to patients.

SM Foundation is scheduled to inaugurate two more Activity Centers before the year ends—one at Cebu Medical Center in Cebu City and another at Northern Mindanao Medical Center in Cagayan de Oro.

THE HOSPICE Care Unit of the Quezon City General Hospital has three beds, a TV and VCD player, and a colorful mural in the background depicting the harvest season.



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Saving lives closer to home

From page D1

Singaporeans should be forgiven if, in their calculations, such a made-for-movies saga deserved equal editorial space in their papers. De Cruz's fate, after all, was not just about a beautiful celebrity struggling for her life and her dreamboat lover's ultimate sacrifice in the name of *amour*.

In a way, the operation's success would also be a validation, a coming out of sorts for Singapore's medical and health care industry and its much-heralded transformation into a highly advanced, world-class practice.

De Cruz and Png's living donor liver transplant (LDLT) case was only the most famous of its kind to hit the papers. But in fact, Gleneagles Hospital, which undertook the operation, had racked up a number of milestones in the field since 1995, when it performed the first LDLT operation in Southeast Asia.

Gleneagles is a member of Parkway Group Healthcare, the largest private healthcare group in Asia. It's the first hospital in the Asia Pacific region to achieve double ISO 9002 certification, and has earned renown for groundbreaking medical achievements mostly in the field of end-stage liver disease.

DE CRUZ and Png at their much-ballyhooed wedding last October

PHOTO COURTESY OF TODAY/MEDIACORP

Crown jewel

"LDLT is the crown jewel of Singapore's health care system," says Dr. Tan Kai Chah, Gleneagles' hepatobiliary surgeon and the doctor to whom De Cruz, Png and many others owe their lives.

Tan has become the leading LDLT practitioner in the region, and with it has come the task of cheerleading Singapore's drive to solidify its stature as the preferred medical and health care destination of liver patients from all over the world, but especially from the nation's neighboring countries.

According to Tan, out of 10 patients in Asia, "eight will die due to a lack of cadaveric liver donors," or liver donations from brain-dead individuals.

"It's unlikely for a patient in this part of the world to go to western countries to wait for a liver donor," he explains. "There is great shortage worldwide for it. Hence, live donor transplantation is the way to go, and in Asia, Gleneagles is the best hospital for this type of treatment."

Indeed, while intensive care units for liver patients are already prevalent in America and Europe, Gleneagles' Liver Failure Unit is the only such dedicated unit in Asia.

The transplant team counts many doctors from different disciplines: anaesthesiology, hepatology, radiology, pathology and microbiology, among others. Related experts such as psychiatrists, neurologists and dieticians are also called in to complete the treatment.

Lower costs

The immediate benefit of having a dedicated LDLT unit in the region is obvious: lower costs.

"The approximate cost of getting LDLT in the US is $300,000 (around P16.5 million)," says Tan. "That's easily double than what you would have to spend if the surgery is done in Singapore."

This is not counting transport costs for family members who would accompany the patient, plus accommodations, maintenance medicine and post-operation checkups, he adds.

It's worth noting that the late Sen. Renato Cayetano underwent an adult-to-adult LDLT (with his youngest son Lino as the liver donor) at the University of Southern California Medical Center in February, before finally succumbing to abdominal cancer in June.

For families in similar straits but with much less resources to spare, Singapore's geographical and cultural closeness and its growing repute for international-caliber medical work would certainly be an attractive option.

That's exactly what swayed Malaysians Ong Chin Keung, 30, and his father, Ong Swee Bee, 55, to submit themselves to Tan's knife in March this year.

The older Ong has had recurring liver problems all his life, capped by a full blown cirrhosis and extensive jaundice that needed radical treatment.

Apprised of the need for a living donor transplant, Ong's family members all volunteered to test for donor fitness. His wife and daughter both had Type B blood; Ong had Type O+. Only the son's blood matched.

"But in the beginning," said the older Ong, "I didn't want my son to donate. It was a risky operation, and he had just began a family, with a baby on the way."

The younger Ong, of course, insisted. It helped that the strapping Jet Li look-alike made for the right donor: Aside from the blood match, he was young, fit and healthy, which increased the operation's chances of success.

"Elective donors [like Ong the son] tend to have a high success rate—around 85 percent—compared to cadaveric donors," notes Tan. "This is because they tend to come from within the family, are reasonably healthy and have greater chances of compatibility with the patient."

The older Ong finally relented, and the operation was done.

Both father and son are now hale and hearty, and profuse in their thanks to Tan for the thorough medical care they received.

"We were even given this booklet of post-operation procedures that covered everything from what to do when traveling to handling pets," says the younger Ong. And just seven months after the operation, "we don't have diet restrictions."

Much lower

The total cost of the operation amounted to S$312,000 (around P9.6 million)—still a hefty sum, but clearly much lower than any similar procedure in America.

The Ong case is now one of the successes being cited by the Parkway Group in its presentations to world media, as part of Singapore's efforts to market its health care services under the "Singapore Medicine" brand name.

Still, the two names that effortlessly make it to the papers—even now, more than a year later—are De Cruz and Png.

Their risky medical journey together culminated in a rash of dramatic headlines.

De Cruz sued the company and the fellow actor that sold her the Slim 10 diet pills, and after a lengthy trial that featured much on-court melodrama, collected S$900,000 in damages. She and Png also recovered from their operations and soon resumed their careers.

Even better, just recently, they finally became Mr. and Mrs. Png, with the local papers once more feasting on the bride and groom as they tied the knot "with all the pomp and glamour befitting Singapore's reigning It couple," as The Sunday Times put it.

Tan, the couple's special guest, couldn't make it to the wedding, as he was in Indonesia attending a conference.

"But no matter what happens...," wrote Lionel Seah in the same paper, "[De Cruz and Png] will always bear the scars—twin inverted Ts cutting across belly and chest—that bind them."

Indeed, liver let live.

Parkway Group Healthcare may be reached at (65) 67355000 or SingHealth International Medical Service at (65) 63265656. E-mail mrc@parkway.com.sg or visit www.singaporemedicine.com

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

MALAYSIAN Ong Chin Keung (upper photo, left) volunteered to donate half of his liver to save his father, Ong Swee Bee, from the ravages of acute liver cirrhosis. The doctor who performed the operation, Dr. Tan Kai Chah of Gleneagles Hospital (right photo, in glasses), is Singapore's leading practitioner of living donor liver transplants and was also responsible for De Cruz and Png's successful operation.

PHOTOS BY GIBBS CADIZ